ANNIVERSARY SPOTLIGHT®

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO LEGO

65 YEARS

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

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Iconic Sets

The Latest on the Next Movie

WHAT'S NEW IN 2023

Avatar, Super Mario, Indiana Jones & More

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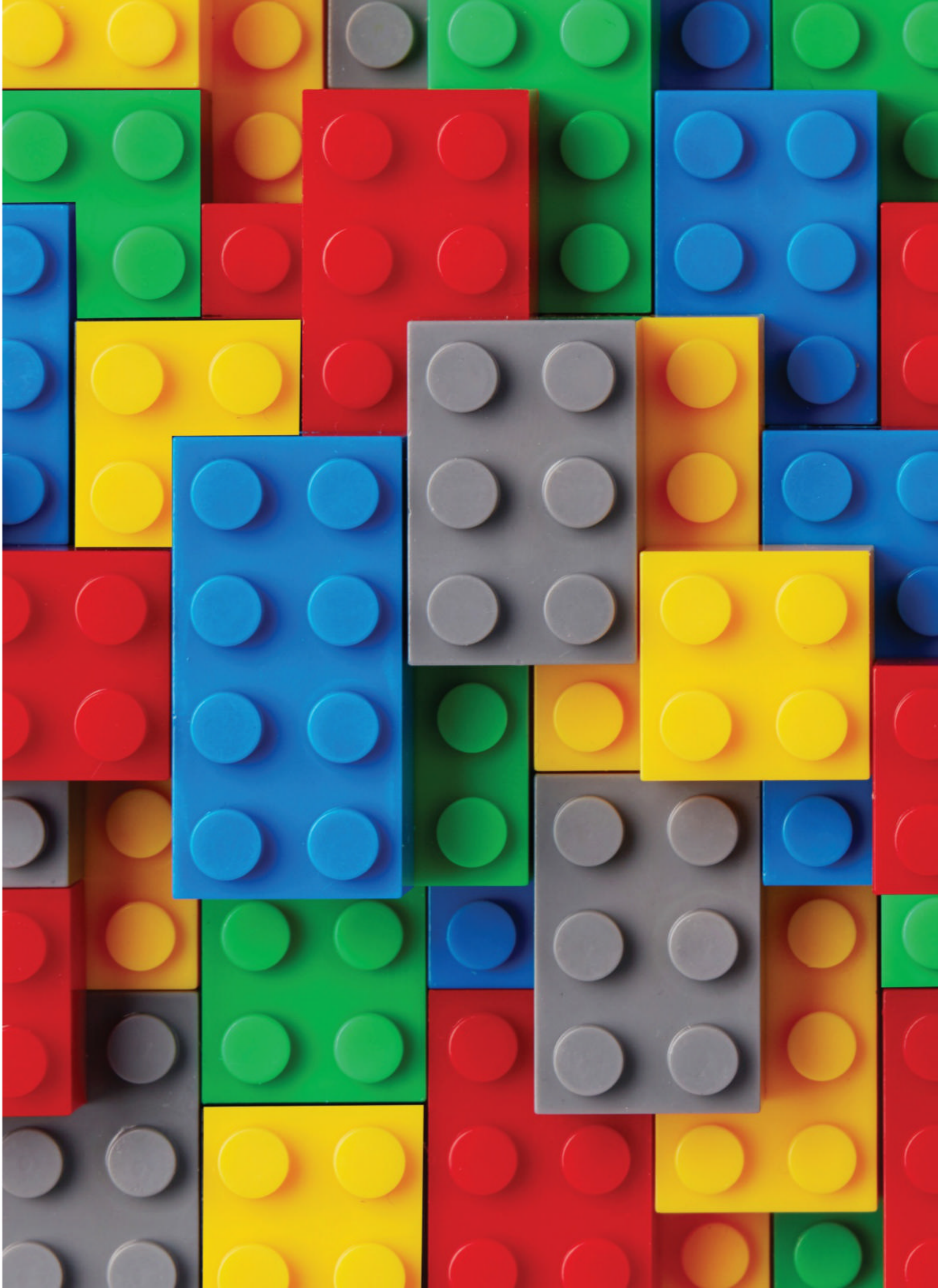

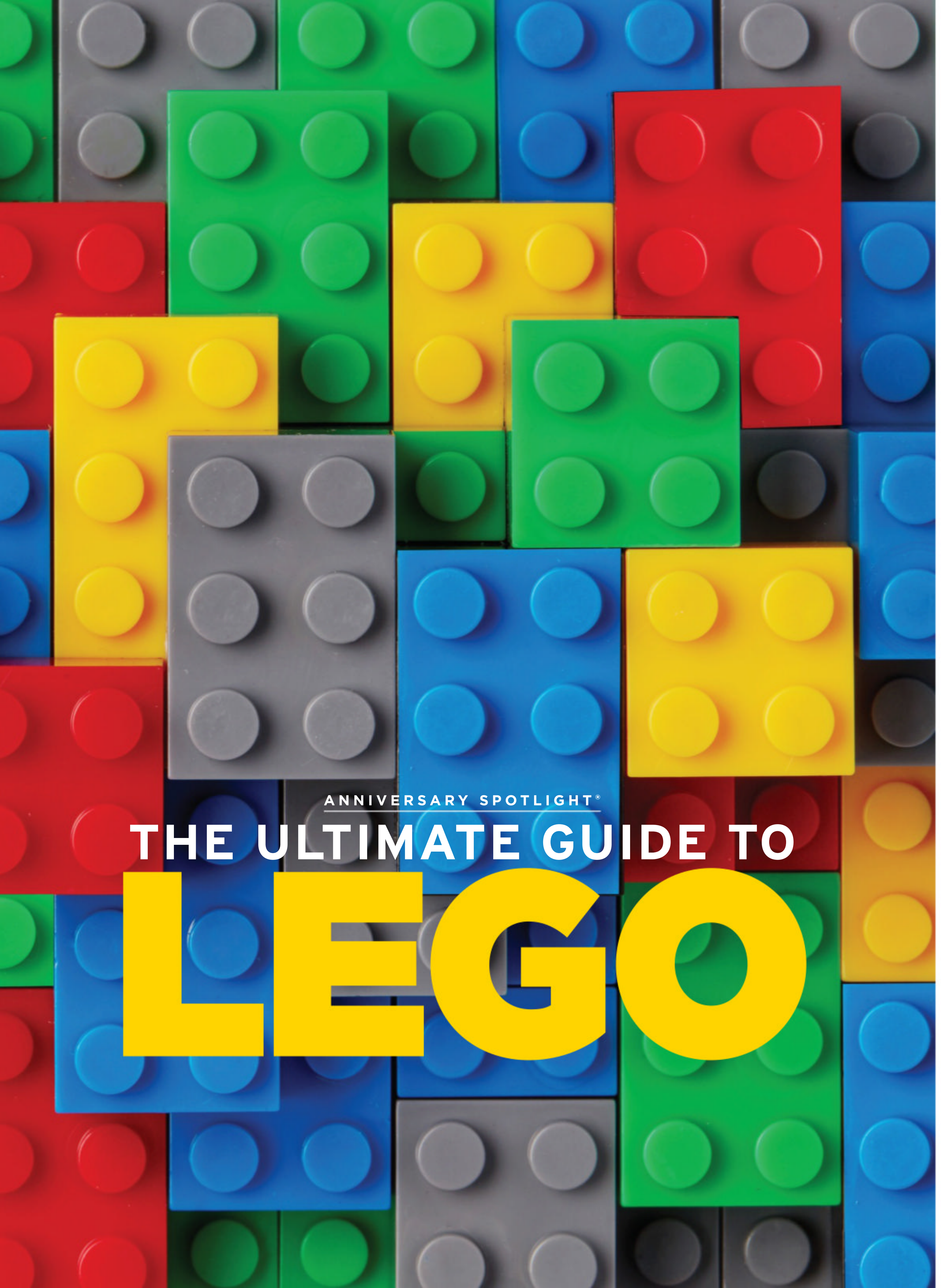

ANNIVERSARY SPOTLIGHT®

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
LEGO

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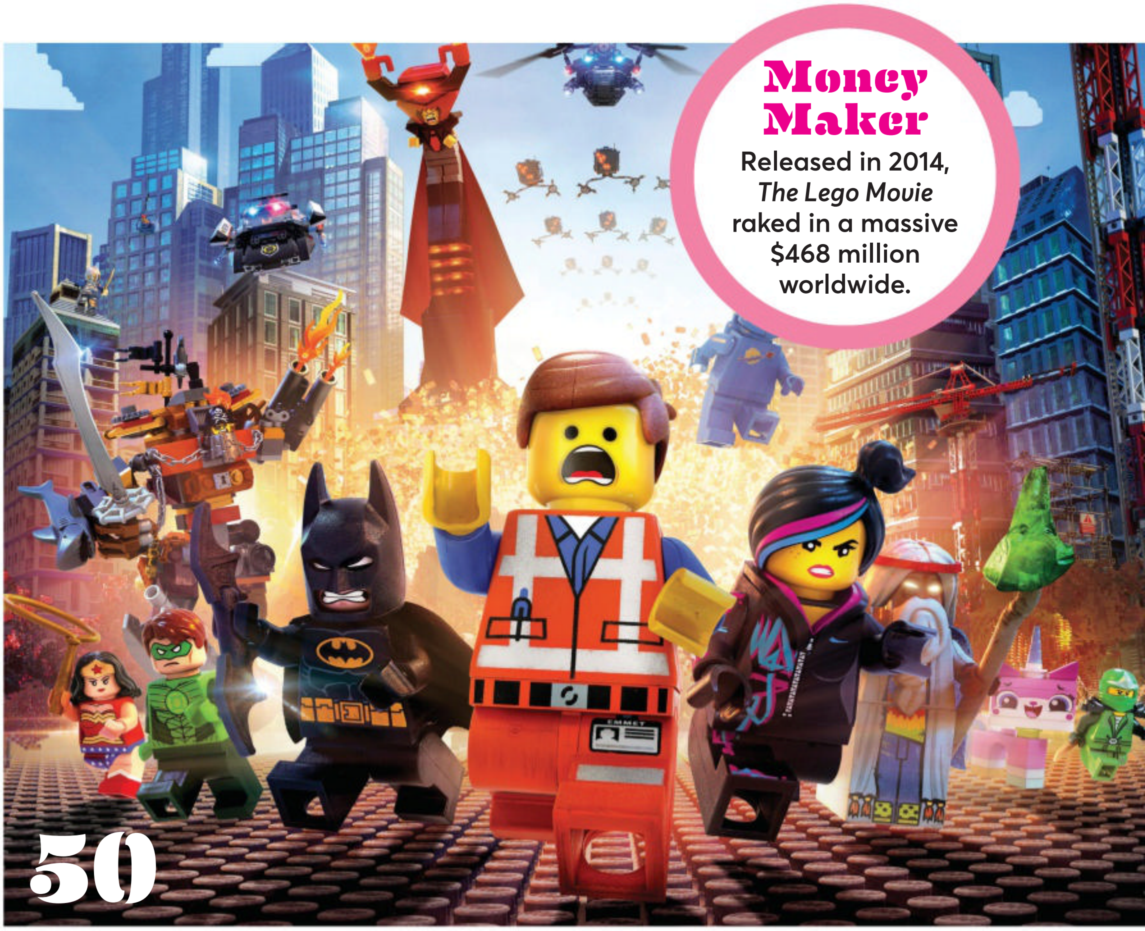

Money Maker

Released in 2014, *The Lego Movie* raked in a massive $468 million worldwide.

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF LEGO!

AS THE BRICKS CELEBRATE THEIR 65TH ANNIVERSARY, WE'RE CELEBRATING ALL THINGS LEGO.

They are so very simple: little plastic bricks that snap into each other, basic enough for a child to enjoy, yet brimming with infinite possibilities. Lego was born on Jan. 28, 1958. That's when the Danish son of a toymaker raced to the patent office with a marvelous design breakthrough that allowed those tiny bricks to fit snuggly together yet pull easily apart. Those innocuous-looking top studs and bottom tubes, combined with the use of a kind of plastic that was both lightweight and incredibly strong, produced a building block capable of constructing everything from the most humble house to a tower reaching hundreds of feet high.

Over the decades, Lego became more than just a plaything. The bricks and their additional parts are an artist's medium; an educational tool; the foundation for a social network; an inspiration for video games, theme parks, a blockbuster movie franchise and a popular TV show; a timely COVID distraction; and an incurable obsession. In these pages, explore the many facets of that miraculous brick, whose potential is limited only by the imagination, and see why Lego is so much more than it's stacked up to be.

Movie Magic

Lego has released 867 *Star Wars*-themed sets since 1999.

To find out about the amazing new Lego sets hitting stores in 2023, turn to page 26.

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Sverige.
LEGO
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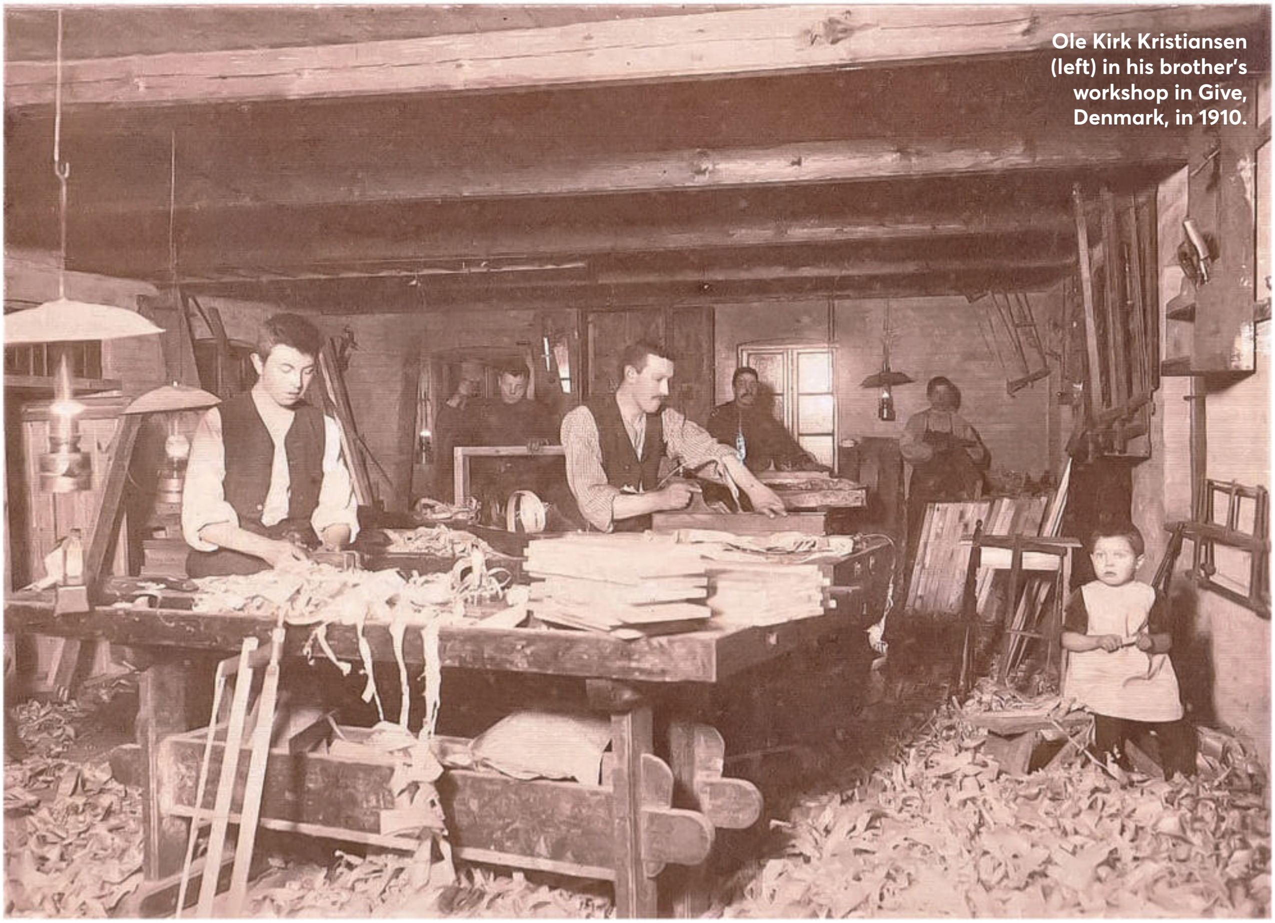
LEGO

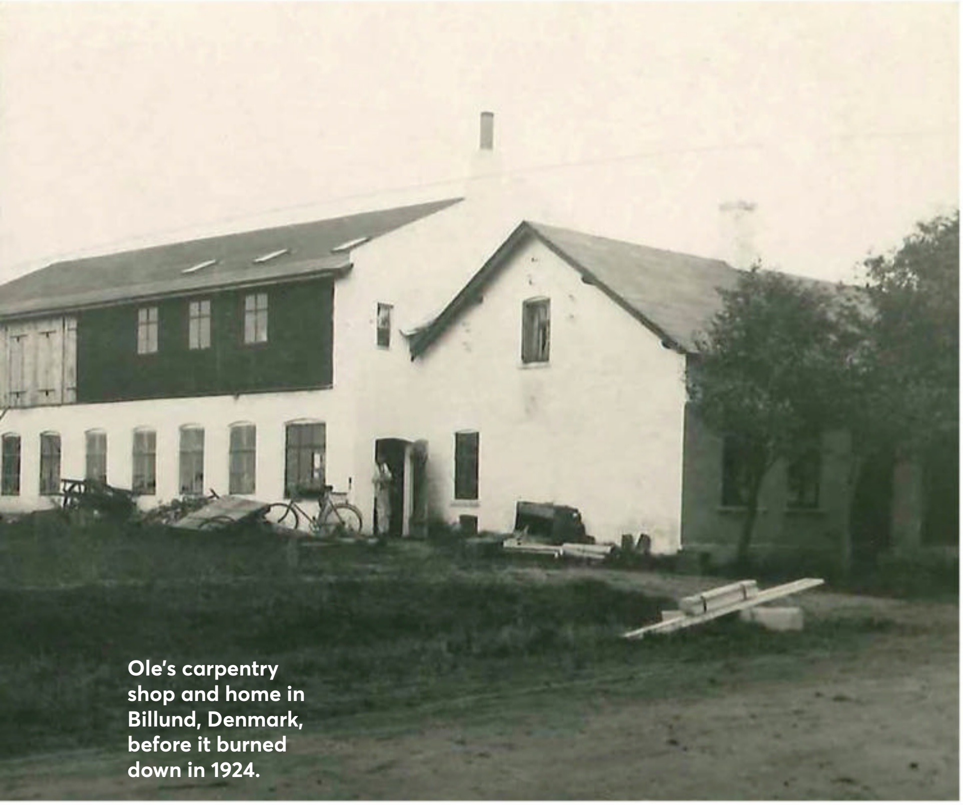
LEGO
MURSTEN
system i lek..

MAKING HISTORY

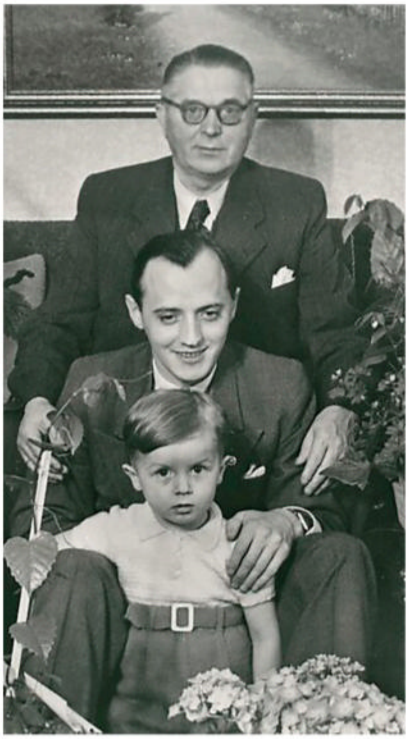
A DANISH CARPENTER CREATED A WORLDWIDE TOY EMPIRE THAT IS BUILT LARGELY OFF OF THE IMAGINATIONS OF KIDS OF ALL AGES.



Ole Kirk Kristiansen (left) in his brother's workshop in Give, Denmark, in 1910.



Ole's carpentry shop and home in Billund, Denmark, before it burned down in 1924.



Three generations (from top): Ole, his son Godtfred and grandson Kjeld.

The wooden duck toy was released in 1935.

Lego's wooden toys and yo-yos were only sold in Denmark.

BUILDING A TOY EMPIRE

BRICK BY BRICK

HOW LEGO GREW OUT OF A DANISH WOODEN TOY SHOP—AND OVERCAME NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES ALONG THE WAY—TO BECOME A PLAY BEHEMOTH.

Back in 1924, a Danish carpenter named Ole Kirk Kristiansen was running a thriving carpentry business, building cupboards, kitchen cabinets, doors, ladders, stools and ironing boards, fulfilling his dream of making his living by working with wood.

The 10th son of a poor family, Ole had worked as a farmhand from the age of 6 and got a basic high school education. Always fascinated with wood, young Ole loved to whittle in his spare time.

After apprenticing for his brother Kresten as a teenager, he left Denmark for the first time in his life to work as a carpenter in Germany in 1911, at the age of 20. When he returned five years later, an established carpentry shop went up for sale in the town of Billund, about 15 miles from his hometown of Omvraa Mark. He purchased the business, employed apprentices of his own and was making plans to expand, when the first of a string of disasters struck.

In 1924, his two sons, Karl Georg and Godtfred, accidentally set fire to wood chips, sparking a blaze that destroyed the shop and family home. Ole scraped together the money to rebuild a bigger and better shop, but in 1929 the American stock market crash caused financial shock waves that rippled all the way to Denmark, sinking the world into the Great Depression. Ole's business suffered as his customers, many of them farmers, couldn't afford his higher-priced cabinetry.

Three years later, Ole suffered a devastating personal loss when his wife, Kristine, died. Financially strapped and emotionally crushed, he laid off most of his workers, bringing his staff to seven, as he scraped by on

K or Ch?
Ole's birth certificate said Kristiansen but he also went by Christiansen.

The Lego Before Lego

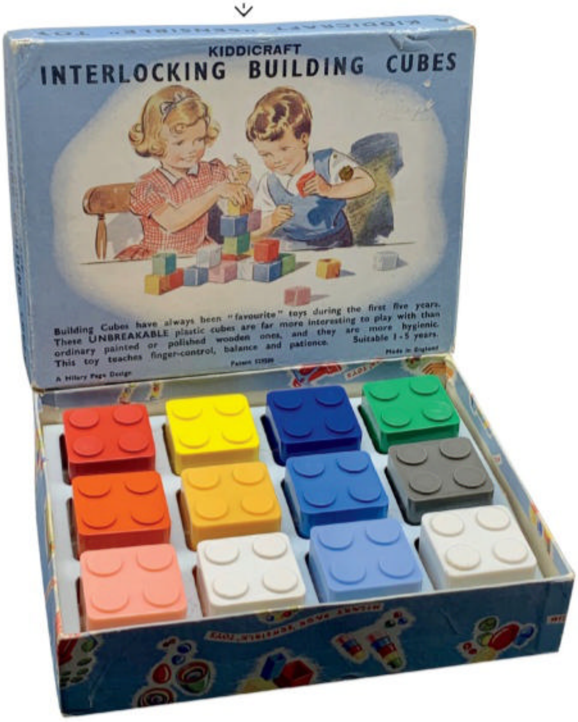
THE BRITISH TOY THAT INSPIRED THE LEGO BRICKS WE KNOW TODAY.

Before there were Legos, there were the Kiddicraft Self-Locking Building Bricks. Created by British toymaker Hilary "Harry" Fisher Page after World War II, the bricks were colorful plastic construction blocks that allowed a child's imagination to run wild. With round "studs" on top, the Kiddicraft bricks could be snapped into place and easily pulled apart for new creations. In 1947, Page patented the bricks and debuted sets that year at the Earl's Court Toy Fair. Lego's founder, Ole Kirk Kristiansen, and son Godtfred had gotten a sneak peek of the bricks, either through a salesman's sample or drawings, and created their own version in 1949 that, with improvements, emerged as the Lego brick in 1953.

According to Lego's official history, the company had reached out to Kiddicraft asking if it objected to the Lego brick. "They do not," the history says. "On the contrary, they wish the company good luck with the bricks, as they have not enjoyed much success with their product."

The Kiddicraft brick itself was inspired by an even earlier version, the U.K.'s Minibrix, developed in the 1930s with molded studs but made of less-durable hard rubber instead of plastic. In 1981, Lego bought the trademark rights for Kiddicraft bricks from Page's descendants.

Kiddicraft's design included slots for accessories such as doors and windows.


KIDDICRAFT
INTERLOCKING BUILDING CUBES
Building Cubes have always been "favourite" toys during the first five years. These UNBREAKABLE plastic cubes are far more interesting to play with than ordinary painted or polished wooden ones, and they are more hygienic. This toy teaches finger-control, balance and patience. Suitable 1-5 years.
Made in England
A Hilary Page Design

sales of lower-priced ironing boards and ladders. Many of his cash-strapped farmer customers had to pay him in crops.

As the Depression ground on, Ole let go his final carpenter and had to take on all of the work with his own hands. Then, in modern-business parlance, he pivoted, shifting from making large cupboards and household goods to constructing miniature versions of the items as aids for designers. He also came up with another idea: Thinking that if there was one thing people battered by the Depression would crave, it was a source of joy into their lives.

So, Ole started making small wooden toys.

From his Santa Claus-like shop emerged cars and trucks, little houses, piggy banks, and whimsical animal pull toys. In what has become one of the most important elements of the company's origin story, Ole emphasized quality, utilizing only the finest materials and best craftsmanship. He used birchwood that had been air-dried for two years and kiln-dried for another three weeks. He meticulously sanded each toy, applied primer, then painted them with three coats of varnish.

Company lore says his motto was "det bedste er ikke for godt"—or "only the best is good enough"—a saying now carved into a plaque that hangs in the family house, which today operates as a museum in Billund.

Despite Ole's best efforts, the business slid into bankruptcy. As he went to his family for a loan to stay afloat, they scoffed at his toy making, advising him to pursue other products, but Ole remained steadfast. His yo-yos sold well during the world yo-yo craze of the 1930s. When that fad faded, Ole did brisk sales with a whimsical wooden pull toy duck with a beak that opened and closed as it moved. (Produced until 1960, the toy is now a highly sought-after collectible.)

As toy sales grew, so did the size of Ole's workforce. In 1934, he decided it was time for his shop—which had never had a formal name—to finally be called something. Ole sponsored a contest, offering a bottle of homemade wine as a prize, for his employees to help come up with a name.

The final choices came down to “Legio,” which Ole thought would call to mind “legion of toys,” and a mashup of the Danish phrase “leg godt,” or “play well,” which came out as “Lego.”

The workers chose well. The newly minted Lego toy shop prospered into the 1940s, even as global war clouds gathered. When Germany occupied Denmark in 1942, imports into the country were cut off and Lego sales soared. Even another fire that leveled the factory couldn’t stop Lego’s success; Ole rebuilt again, modernized and expanded. Toy sales more than doubled.

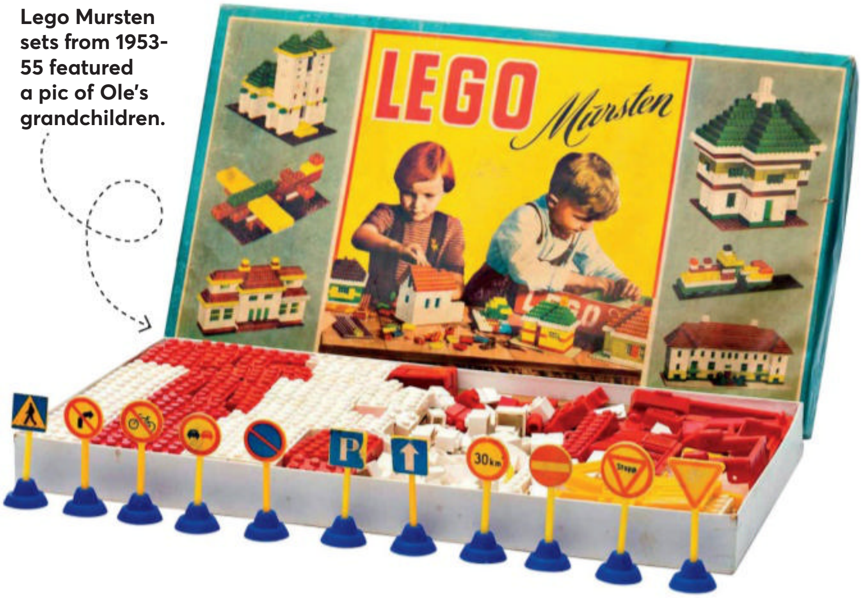
The end of the war in 1945 brought a new challenge, as material shortages prevented the manufacture of numerous products. Like many other businesses, Ole looked into using a new kind of material: plastics. Though plastics were still on the banned list of materials for manufacturers, he experimented with injecting melted plastic into molds to make toy parts.

Clockwise from top: The new Lego factory, rebuilt after a fire, in 1943; the first product line in 1932; a Lego employee at a milling machine in 1938.

Strong Values

“Our aim is to do a really good and solid and pleasing piece of work,” Ole wrote.

When the Danish government lifted the plastic ban in 1947, Ole could quickly start producing a new line of toys, starting with a plastic truck that could be easily assembled. Customers didn’t immediately embrace the idea, still preferring wooden and metal toys, but a determined Ole continued to focus on mold-injection manufacturing.


Lego Mursten sets from 1953-55 featured a pic of Ole’s grandchildren.

THE FIRST BRICKS

Intrigued by a British line of interlocking plastic bricks called the Kiddicraft Self-Locking Building Bricks (see sidebar, page 12), Ole and his designers went to the drawing board to create their own version, and in 1949 produced a set of what Lego called the Automatic Binding Bricks.

The forerunner to the Lego bricks, these bricks were one color—white—with round studs on top and hollow bottoms so the bricks could snap into place to make a wall or other simple creations, then could be easily taken apart to be used on another project.

Town sets in the 1960s had a blueprint for where the buildings should be placed.

City Life

Lego Town sets were rebranded Lego City in 2005.

Lego envisioned the bricks as part of an interlocking system of toys to unleash a child's imagination, similar to the popular metal erector sets but with fewer tiny pieces.

By the early 1950s, the public had warmed to the idea of plastic toys. Lego's plastic tractor became a bestseller in 1951, and the following year plastic product sales surpassed wood sales for the first time.

But the newly named Lego Mursten, or Lego Bricks, still lagged. Although the design improved upon the British version, they still didn't lock together well, prompting complaints from customers.

The turning point came in 1958. The mind trust at Lego cooked up the three-tube interior design that allowed for more tightly locking bricks, and the die was cast. Lego has seen no reason to change the design over the years. A brick made in the 1950s will still lock with a brick from a Lego set today. The new brick was patented on Jan. 28, 1958, an occasion now celebrated as International Lego Day (see sidebar, page 17).

THE BIRTH OF MODERN LEGO

Guided by Ole's son Godtfred, who took over the company after his father died in 1958, The Lego Group embarked on more than three decades of expansion and technological innovation. A deal with the luggage company Samsonite to manufacture Lego allowed for products to be sold in the United States and Canada in the 1960s. Lego changed the plastics formula to a material that was more stable, nontoxic and virtually impervious to any damage little hands could try to inflict (it also inadvertently made rock-hard and sharp Legos particularly painful to step on; see page 42).

During the 1960s, Lego also introduced the first wheels to allow for building vehicles, unveiled the Lego train system with a battery-powered motor and rails, added instruction manuals to sets, produced the first line of larger bricks for preschoolers—the Duplo system (see page 40)—and in 1968 opened the first Legoland Park, a 14-acre attraction in Billund featuring towns built entirely of Legos (see page 70). In the first year, the park welcomed a staggering 625,000 visitors.

The 1970s saw Lego creating sets to make ships that actually float and, for the first time, tried to appeal to girls with sets for dollhouses and jewelry. (Until then, all Lego boxes announced the contents were appropriate only for boys ages 7 to 12.) Also arriving were early versions of the Lego minifigures—with no faces, and arms that couldn't be moved. They were soon replaced with figures that had smiley faces and posable arms and legs. A Creator Expert Series of sets targeted older Lego builders.

Through the 1980s, the sets became even more advanced and elaborate, with trains featuring working lights and signals, minifigures with a variety of expressions and facial features to make them look like swashbucklers and medieval knights and ladies for the pirate and castle sets. Lego products flew off the shelves at Toys

THATCHER PERKINS
396

This rare Thatcher Perkins Locomotive was released in 1976.

R Us as a new generation of builders embraced the sets.

CRUMBLING DOWN

Then, in the early 1990s, the toy world was hit with an existential crisis. The source: video games. The explosion in digital technology brought that fast-action excitement to the living room. Video games became more advanced and smaller—kids were now playing on handheld Game Boys. This, combined with the expansion of cable television and video movie rentals, had toy manufacturers fearing that their analog products were too boring and old-fashioned in a digital world.

Like many other toy manufacturers facing the same challenges—including Mattel, Barbie and Matchbox—Lego responded to the changing times by diversifying. Throughout the 1990s, The Lego Group developed video games and started its own Hollywood-style production company, despite having little knowledge or experience in either field.

Lego opened more theme parks that were expensive to build but underwhelmed visitors accustomed to Disneyland. At the same time, as manufacturing was outsourced, Lego sets slipped in quality and quantity. The pirate set—a perennial favorite—was discontinued along with other classic sets. Duplo was discontinued. It was the worst of both worlds. Lego couldn't find new customers and alienated its old ones.

In 1998, the company posted its first-ever loss and laid off 1,000 employees. The only bright spots were newly created licensing tie-ins with the *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter* film series. Those themed Lego sets sold well—but only as long as there was a movie in theaters. Between blockbuster releases, toy sales cratered.

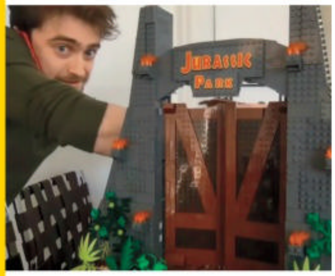
The more Lego spent on new ventures, the more it became clear it was money going down the drain. "We continued to invest as if the company were growing strongly," executive vice president of marketing Mads Nipper told *The Telegraph* in the U.K. in

Celebrity Fans

THESE STARS LOVE LEGO!

MATTHEW PERRY

Can a toy *be* any more fun? *Friends*' sarcastic star is totally and unironically enthusiastic when it comes to his love of Lego. Naturally, he had to build the *Friends* TV set Lego kit. But, Chandler being Chandler, he tweeted, "I made myself Batman. But that's neither here nor there."

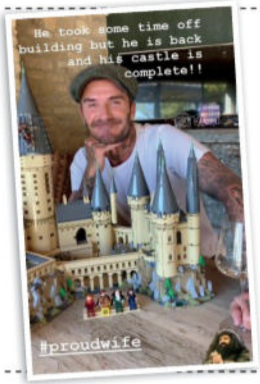


DANIEL RADCLIFFE

While he has his own minifigure in the *Harry Potter* sets, the actor instead ventured into another movie blockbuster-themed set, spending days...and days...and days...on a 3,200-piece *Jurassic Park* set, with the help of his girlfriend. "It took up a lot of time," he told *The Late Show*'s Stephen Colbert, "and was weirdly meditative."

BRITNEY SPEARS

The pop princess is crazy for Lego. "Oh & look at my new hobby my children have given me—my new past time pleasure is building legos," the singer wrote on Instagram in 2011 as she shared a pic of a helicopter she'd constructed.



He took some time off building but he is back and his castle is complete!!

#proudwife

DAVID BECKHAM

Can you build it like Beckham? The soccer legend has spent his retirement from the pitch staying up late at night constructing *Star Wars* spaceships and other sets. His wife, Victoria Beckham, poked fun at him by posting a video of the engrossed athlete at work, zooming in on the box and noting it's made for children 11 or older. "I mean, you should be all right," she teased. Beckham replied, "I should be finished today."

ANNA KENDRICK

Like many others, the *Pitch Perfect* actress endured COVID with the Zen-like qualities of Lego. Though rather than tinker with small projects, Kendrick dove into the ambitious Millennium Falcon set from *Star Wars*. "I'm doing too much Lego," she told *The Tonight Show*'s Jimmy Fallon in 2020. "It's so much fun. It shouldn't be this much fun. I'm a grown-up."

Ole’s grandson Kjeld at the ground-breaking of Legoland in Windsor, England, in 1994.

2009. “We failed to realize that we were on a slippery path.... We were not making toys that were sufficiently interesting to children. We failed to innovate enough. And we had nowhere to cut deep enough to right-size the company.”

A REBOUND

By 2004, with Lego posting record losses, change had to come, and quickly. There was a shake-up in the upper corporate ranks, financial belt-tightening was implemented, and everybody took a long hard look at what it really meant to be The Lego Group. “We are on a burning platform,” said the new CEO, Jørgen Vig Knudstorp, the first non-family member to lead the company. “We’re running out of cash… [and] likely won’t survive.”

What Lego executives came to realize was that the answer to its problems had been staring them in the face since the 1950s. “We did a lot of really heavy-duty research and what we realized is that the Lego brick is still incredibly relevant,” Mike Moynihan, senior vice president of brand marketing, told CNBC. “Rather than digitalization being a threat to us, we realized that it could actually be an accelerant to our business.”

It was all about the brick.

Kids—boys and girls—plus a whole lot of adults still loved building things with Lego, a fact that those in charge somehow managed to come close to forgetting. After selling off four Legoland parks, the company restored control of the brick manufacturing process, which had been almost completely outsourced by the 1990s. “The Lego company at that stage had no idea how much it cost to manufacture the majority of their bricks,” longtime Lego mega-fan Mark Stafford wrote on Reddit. “They had no idea how much certain sets made.”

Who Knew?

It takes more than a year to design a Lego minifigure!

The company began working with Stafford and other amateur designers—people who knew and loved Lego passionately and who became key sources of inspiration. Lego launched Lego-themed conventions and crowdsourced designs, going online to solicit ideas, resulting in such popular sets as a Lego version of the coffee house set from the TV show *Friends* (see sidebar, page 15).

Lego updated classic sets, brought back Duplo, and launched into robotics (see page 38) while embracing its decentralized system for managing innovation that flew in the face of highly centralized creative cultures at companies such as Apple and Facebook, which were built around their creators Steve Jobs and Mark Zuckerberg, respectively.

"Lego emerged from its near-death experience as the world's most profitable and fast-growing toy company," according to the 2013 book *Brick by Brick*, a must-read text at business schools about how a company can innovate.

Having dramatically changed course, Lego then got two more boosts. The first was the 2014 release of *The Lego Movie*, a computer-animated adventure romp from Warner Bros. with an all-star cast (see page 50) that garnered rave reviews, made $468 million worldwide, and spawned a movie franchise and TV series.

The next one came in 2020. By then, the company was already going all-in on its adult customers, releasing sets of boggling size, complexity and cost. Then the media picked up on the idea that even simple Lego projects served adult purposes by creating calming distractions from the world's problems. Lego released an ad touting the "Zen" benefits of Lego, and in January 2020, *The Washington Post* touted Legos as mindful outlets for a "growing demographic: stressed-out adults."

Within weeks, those stresses would rise to unprecedented levels as the coronavirus pandemic upended life as we know it. Lego took the same hits as other companies, shuttering factories and stores. But it soon enjoyed a monster boost in online sales as adults turned to Lego to entertain—and educate—their locked-down kids while providing some gentle stress relief for themselves.

Even after the end of lockdown, sales soared, with revenue leaping 27% in 2021. The first six months of 2022 saw another 17% rise in revenue, paced by the continued popularity of *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter* sets. Now, Lego stores are reopening and the company is expanding aggressively into China while introducing new toys.

Today, Lego stands, one brick upon another, as the largest and most profitable toy company in the world.

Fans of The Pig House can expect more Minecraft releases in 2023.

The Bricks Turn 65!

On Jan. 28, 1958, Godtfred Kirk Christiansen submitted paperwork to the Danish Patent and Trademark Office for building blocks that "could be put together in a great number of mutually different positions," as the original patent filing says.

Over the next few months, patent applications were filed in Norway, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Italy, France, Switzerland and Belgium. Patents were next filed from South Africa to the United States. But it was that original patent filing, submitted at 1:58 p.m., that is considered the birthday of the Lego brick, which turns 65 years young on International Lego Day, Jan. 28, 2023.

While no official celebration plans have been made public as of press time, fans can look forward to a slew of new Lego sets in 2023. The Brick Fanatics website reported that there are a host of Marvel models coming, with three sets tied to the eagerly anticipated sequel *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, and plenty of new *Star Wars* releases, including some for *The Mandalorian* Season 3, which debuts on Disney+ on March 1.

We'll also see new additions to the Lego City, Classic, Creator, Friends, Minecraft and Ninjago lineups during the year. January will see a possible new cast of collectible minifigures, a Monkey King Ultra Mech and five Disney sets, including Princess castles and a Lightning McQueen Car Wash, followed by three Harry Potter DOTS sets in March.

For more on 2023's new releases (including *Avatar* and Super Mario), turn to page 26!

LEGO ANATOMY 101

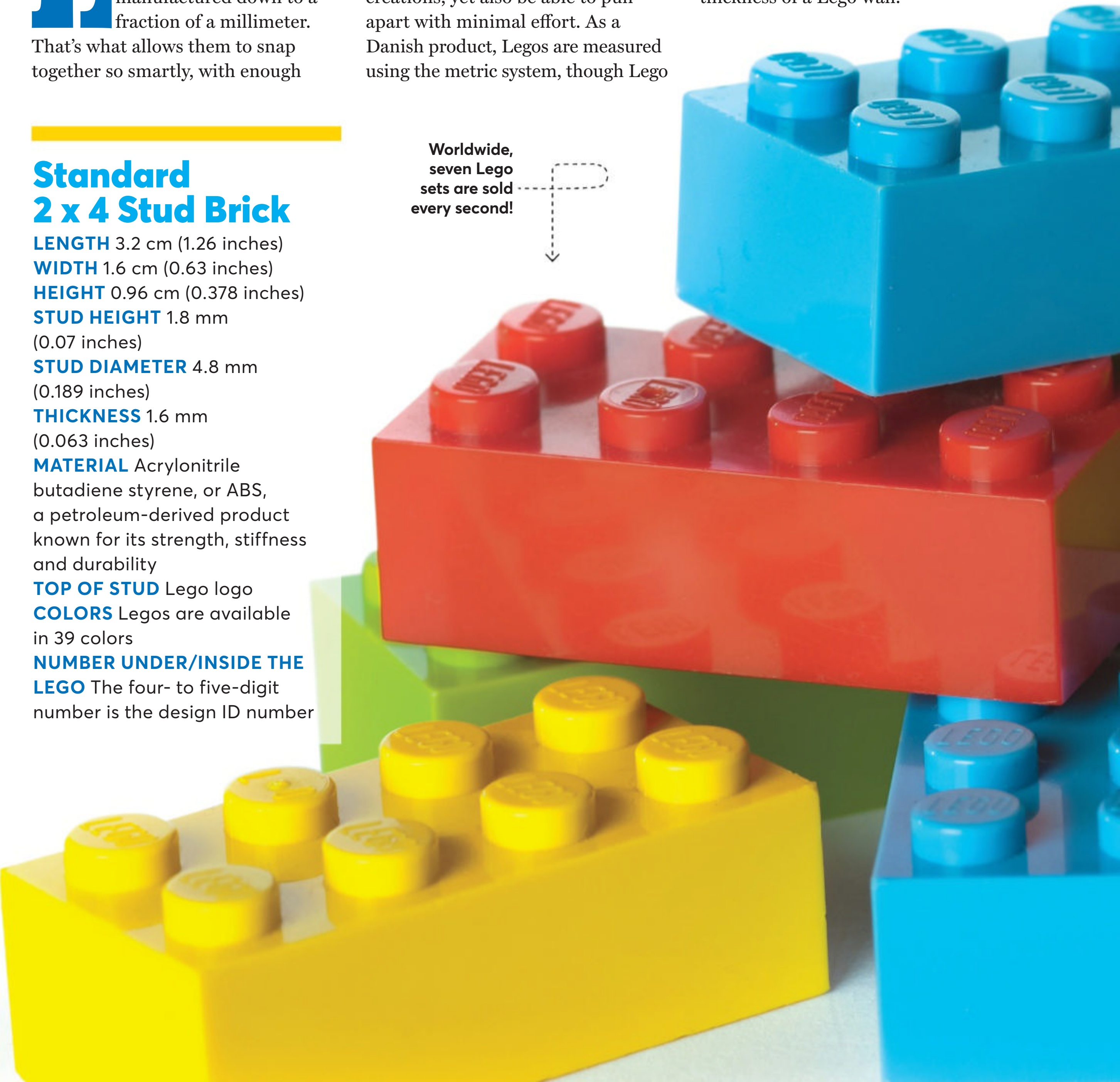
AN UP-CLOSE LOOK AT BRICKS, STUDS AND MINIFIGURES.

Like a finely engineered clock, Lego bricks are manufactured down to a fraction of a millimeter. That's what allows them to snap together so smartly, with enough strength to create both massive sculptures and the most precise creations, yet also be able to pull apart with minimal effort. As a Danish product, Legos are measured using the metric system, though Lego has its own measurement system. One "Lego unit" is 1.6 mm, or the thickness of a Lego wall.

Standard 2 x 4 Stud Brick

LENGTH 3.2 cm (1.26 inches)
WIDTH 1.6 cm (0.63 inches)
HEIGHT 0.96 cm (0.378 inches)
STUD HEIGHT 1.8 mm (0.07 inches)
STUD DIAMETER 4.8 mm (0.189 inches)
THICKNESS 1.6 mm (0.063 inches)
MATERIAL Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, or ABS, a petroleum-derived product known for its strength, stiffness and durability
TOP OF STUD Lego logo
COLORS Legos are available in 39 colors
NUMBER UNDER/INSIDE THE LEGO The four- to five-digit number is the design ID number

Worldwide, seven Lego sets are sold every second!



One-Brick Stud

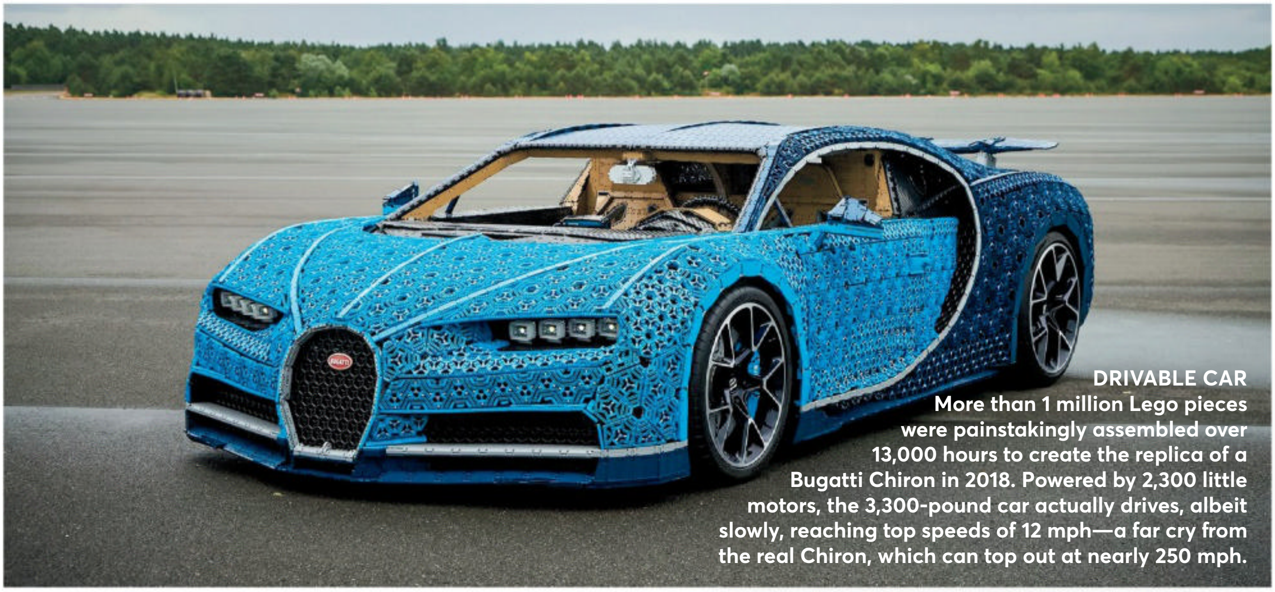
WIDTH 8 mm (.315 inches)

All studs have the Lego logo imprinted on them.

A set of minifigures was sent into space in 2011 on NASA's Juno mission to Jupiter.

Classic Minifigure

HEIGHT 4 cm (1.57 inches), counting the head stud. That's four bricks tall, although some are a little taller with head accessories.
NUMBER OF PIECES 9-10 parts, including the head, torso, arms, hands, hips and legs

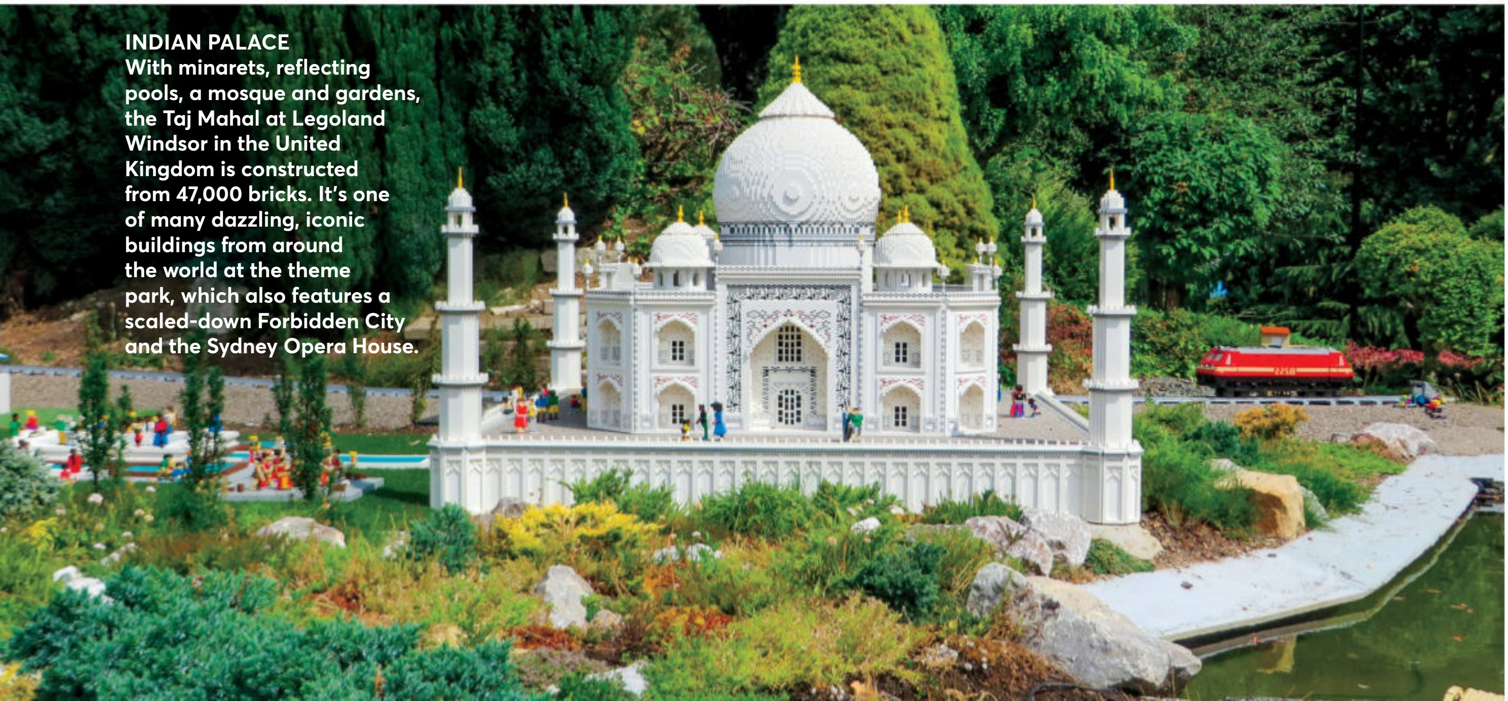


DRIVABLE CAR
More than 1 million Lego pieces were painstakingly assembled over 13,000 hours to create the replica of a Bugatti Chiron in 2018. Powered by 2,300 little motors, the 3,300-pound car actually drives, albeit slowly, reaching top speeds of 12 mph—a far cry from the real Chiron, which can top out at nearly 250 mph.

FANTASTIC CREATIONS

THESE AMAZING ASSEMBLAGES WILL BLOW YOUR MIND!

Far more than just toys, in the hands of those with soaring imaginations—and a lot of free time—the little plastic building blocks serve as the perfect medium for stunning sculptures, dazzling works of art and incredible moving machines. Builders from around the world push the plastic possibilities to spectacular lengths before pulling it apart and starting all over again.

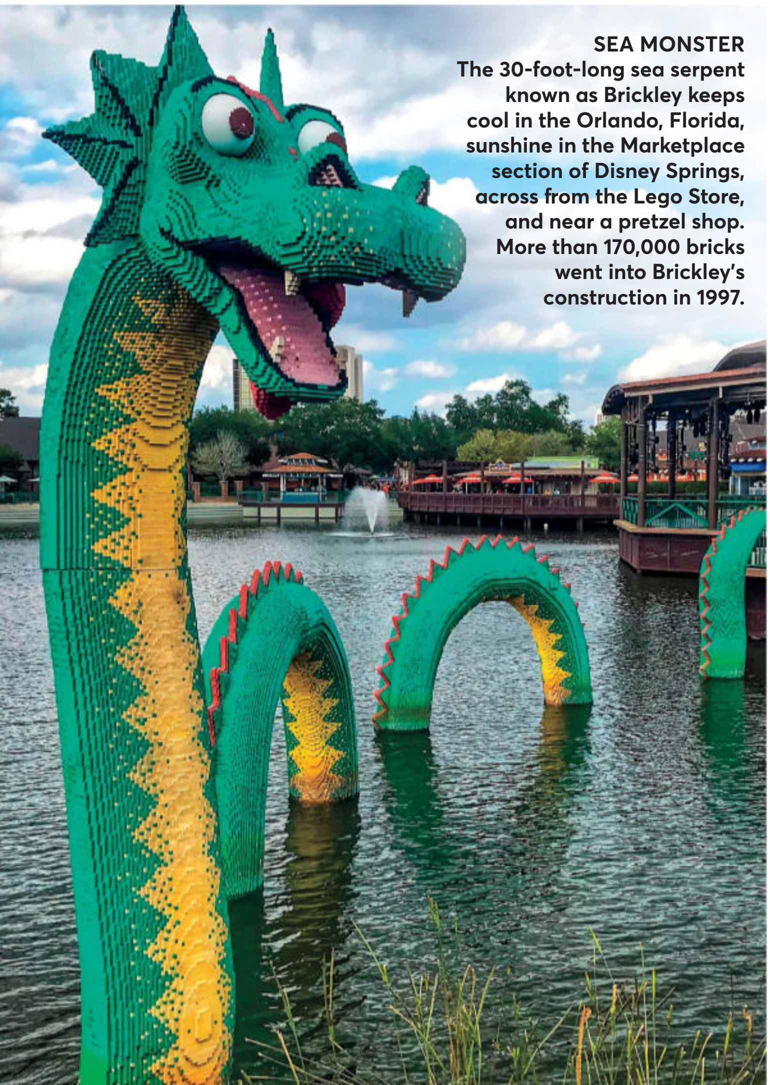


INDIAN PALACE
With minarets, reflecting pools, a mosque and gardens, the Taj Mahal at Legoland Windsor in the United Kingdom is constructed from 47,000 bricks. It's one of many dazzling, iconic buildings from around the world at the theme park, which also features a scaled-down Forbidden City and the Sydney Opera House.

Sea of Green

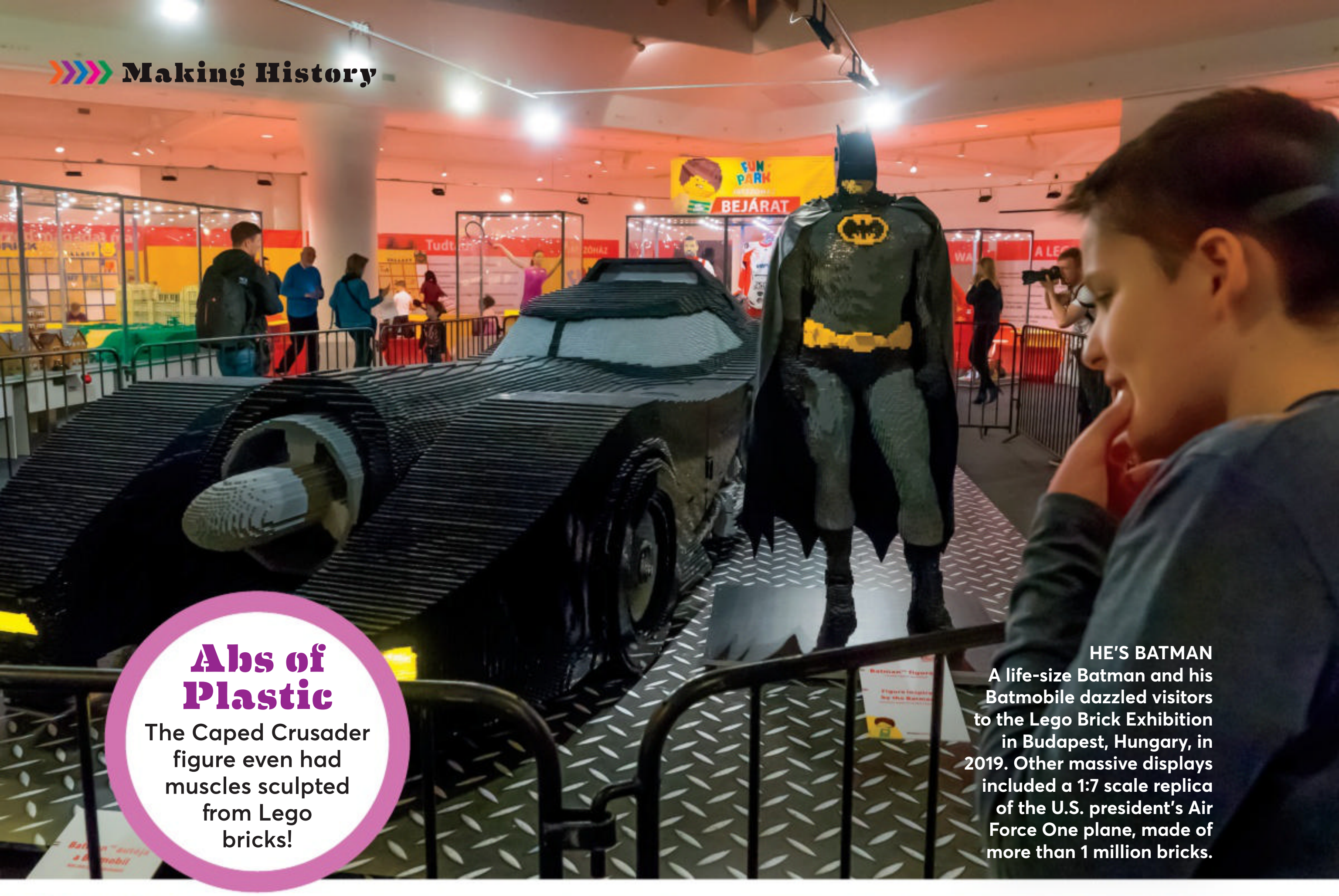
Beatles Yellow Submarine sets from 2016 now sell for more than $200 on eBay.

THE FAB FOUR
The Beatles took the stage at the Art of the Brick exhibition at the Old Truman Brewery in London in 2014, but the band competed for attention with a Lego version of a much more recent group: One Direction.



SEA MONSTER
The 30-foot-long sea serpent known as Brickley keeps cool in the Orlando, Florida, sunshine in the Marketplace section of Disney Springs, across from the Lego Store, and near a pretzel shop. More than 170,000 bricks went into Brickley's construction in 1997.

TALLEST TOWER
It took half a million bricks to construct the world's tallest Lego tower at Legoland Windsor in 2012. Comprised of more than 160 sections, the tower soared 105 feet, taking hundreds of people four days to complete. Perched atop the tower with a magnificent view of the park were minifigures representing Great Britain's Olympic athletes.



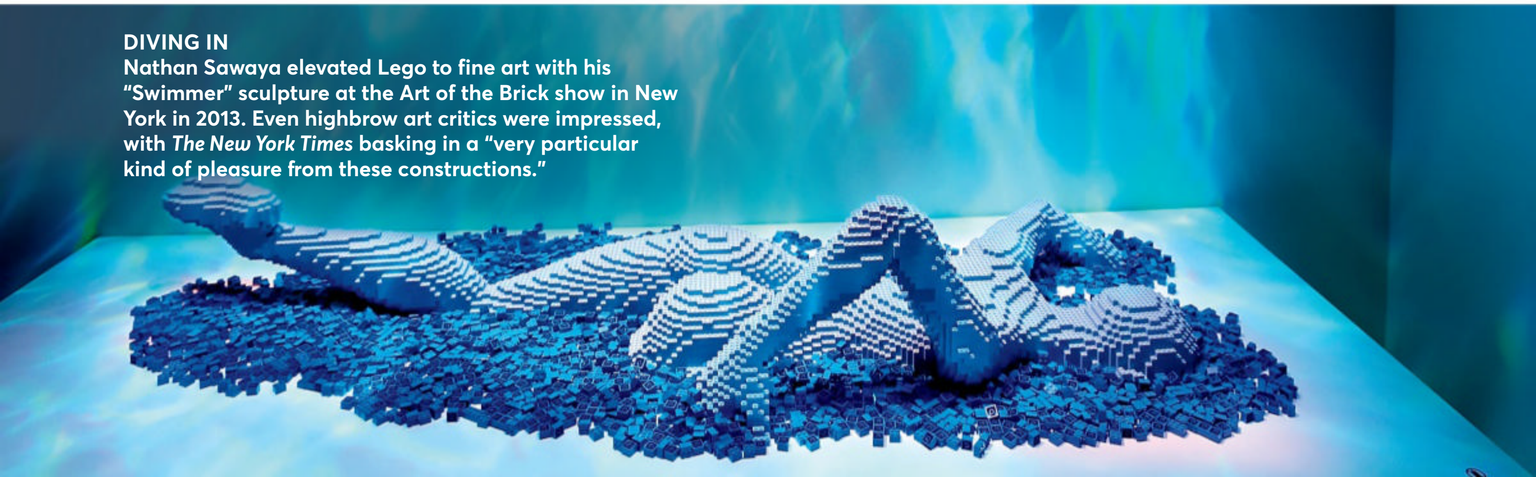
Abs of Plastic

The Caped Crusader figure even had muscles sculpted from Lego bricks!

HE'S BATMAN
A life-size Batman and his Batmobile dazzled visitors to the Lego Brick Exhibition in Budapest, Hungary, in 2019. Other massive displays included a 1:7 scale replica of the U.S. president's Air Force One plane, made of more than 1 million bricks.

A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY
Seven *Star Wars* scenes made with more than 1.5 million Legos brought The Force to Legoland in Carlsbad, California.

LONDON CALLING
The world's most famous clock, Big Ben, towers over a mini-version of the British Parliament building at Legoland Windsor.



DIVING IN
Nathan Sawaya elevated Lego to fine art with his "Swimmer" sculpture at the Art of the Brick show in New York in 2013. Even highbrow art critics were impressed, with *The New York Times* basking in a "very particular kind of pleasure from these constructions."

SCARY CREATURE
Jurassic Park got some stiff competition from England's Marwell Zoo, which in 2019 featured what was billed as the "largest touring Lego brick dinosaur model ever made." The 26-foot-tall Tyrannosaurus Rex was part of a brick-o-saurus exhibit that took 969 days and more than 2 million bricks to build.

The World's Best Lego Builders

THESE TALENTED INDIVIDUALS CREATE STUNNING WORKS OF ART.

It's one of the most exclusive clubs in the United States, the 33 people who build those incredible displays at Legoland parks around the world. In 2021, a woman joined this male-dominated society of Master Builders when Danielle Ross was hired at New York's Legoland in Goshen to create new masterpieces, maintain the 15,000 existing ones, and promote diversity and inclusion by building Minilanders, large-size versions of the Minifigures "of all different creeds, races, religions and ethnic groups." With a background in sculpture and construction, Ross never played with Legos as a child but easily made the transition to Master Builder. As she told Insider, "It just starts with creativity."

Creating pieces that explore the Black identity, Lego artist Ekow Nimako works exclusively with black bricks, creating "monuments to Black youth." Lego fan and Indiana Pacers center Myles Turner commissioned a 100,000-piece, 7-foot-tall statue of himself as Darth Vader from Nimako in 2022.

"I love being a role model for girls to look up to," Danielle Ross said.

"I get to breach topics and make them accessible," noted Ekow Nimako.

BRICKS: THEN, NOW, NEXT

FIND OUT THE SECRETS OF THE LITTLE PLASTIC MARVELS THAT CAN MAKE AMAZING CREATIONS—AND REALLY HURT WHEN YOU STEP ON THEM.

The first *Avatar* sets came out in October 2022.

Big News
Jay's Brick Blog reports that a BTS set will be out in 2023.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2023

HERE ARE SOME OF THE SETS BEING RELEASED THIS YEAR, ALONG WITH SOME RUMORED PROJECTS.

Avatar

James Cameron's long-awaited sequel to 2009's sci-fi blockbuster *Avatar* has inspired a collection of 10 *Avatar: The Way of Water* aquatic adventure Lego sets that take Jake Sully's family and other characters back to Pandora. Although the sets span different locations and even different movies, they can be mixed and matched to form unique creations and launch new adventures. "Once we determined that different sections should join together," Lego Avatar designer Atticus Tsai-McCarthy told Brickset, "we laid out how they could be combined in a cohesive way, while representing completely separate parts of Pandora."

Super Mario

Everybody's favorite Italian plumber will appear on the big screen in *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* in April 2023. While the new line of Mario sets coming out early in the year aren't directly linked to the film, they will offer players a host of new adventures. Among the expansion packs of existing sets is this cool offering, the Ice Mario Suit and Frozen World Expansion Set, which includes an ice suit for Mario and a blue ice plate that makes skating sounds when Mario glides across it.

Indiana Jones

According to the Lego blog Brick Fanatics, "everyone's favourite whip-cracking adventurer" is expected to return in three rumored sets for the first time since 2009, based on the old *Indiana Jones* movies and the upcoming *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*, which is out on June 30.

Friends With a Disabled Dog

The Friends sets return in 2023 with the minifigure kids from Heartlake City. Based on the animated TV series, the Friends line has always offered more realistic characters, with different genders and skin tones, along with characters with disabilities. Now, according to the Lego news site Brick Fanatics, the reboot line of five new sets includes a disabled dog. In the Dog Rescue Center, a dachshund uses a set of wheels for its back legs.

Jurassic Park

The 30th anniversary of *Jurassic Park* in 2023 has Lego blogs buzzing about new dino-themed sets. "*Jurassic Park* is where it all started," Universal Products & Experiences president Vince Klaseus told License Global, "and it remains the cornerstone of the brand—and we'll be celebrating the film's 30th anniversary in a big way…capitalizing on the nostalgia and iconography that generations of fans love." While no Lego sets have been announced, with the brand so intertwined over the years with Steven Spielberg's franchise, Lego blogs speculate there could be as many as five new sets.

LEGO
Harry Potter
THE DARK LORD
LEGO
Harry Potter
OFFICIAL YEARBOOK 2024

The Minifigure-That-Must-Not-Be-Named

Two Lego-themed *Harry Potter* books are set to be published in 2023, and speculation is running high they may come with a new minifigure of Voldemort. The buzz is based on sneak-peek photos of the covers (above) that have blacked out one of the minifigures.

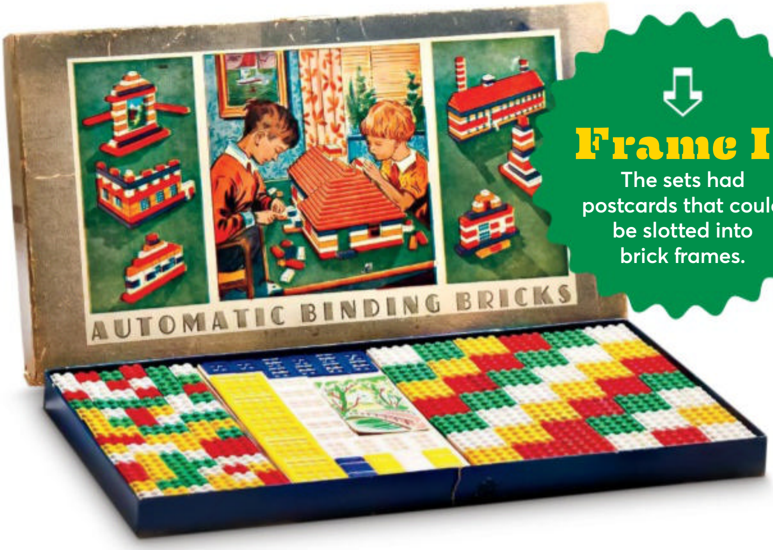
Chinese Traditional Festivals

Expanding its line in the lucrative China market, Lego marks the Year of the Rabbit with several sets, highlighted by the 1,653-piece Lunar New Year Parade of three colorful connectible floats with 18 minifigures, including masked performers and musicians. Another set, the Lunar New Year Display, features such symbols as golden ingots, koi fish and peony flowers. A Duplo Town set teaches younger builders food and musical traditions, and a good luck Money Tree is decorated with red envelopes, gold coins and 20 tangerines.

Lego was introduced to the Chinese market in the 1980s.

ICONIC LEGO SETS

FROM SIMPLE BRICK HOUSES TO SLEEK SPACESHIPS WITH THOUSANDS OF PIECES, LEGO'S BOXED SETS HAVE GROWN WITH THE COMPANY.



Frame It
The sets had postcards that could be slotted into brick frames.

1949

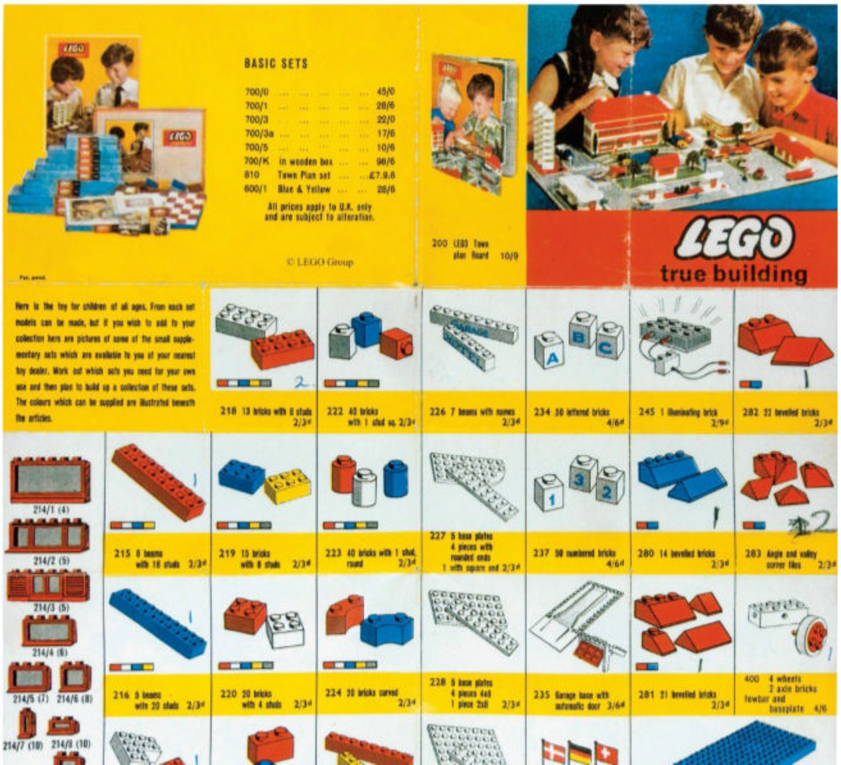
AUTOMATIC BINDING BRICKS

The predecessor to the Lego system, these building sets inspired by the British line of Kiddicraft Self-Locking Building Bricks came with an English name—a tribute to the Allied forces that liberated Europe in World War II—but were sold exclusively in Denmark. Initially coming in just two colors, red and yellow, the binding bricks were marketed as toys to unleash children's imaginations. Promotional materials showed boys and girls constructing elaborate houses, factories and towers. The first sets arrived on shelves in 1949 and sold for the next three years, with more colors added, but they flopped in the marketplace. The bricks were made of a less durable kind of plastic and didn't fit well together. Many stores returned unused sets. Today, the sets are collector's items, fetching thousands of dollars. After 1957, Lego re-released sets with a stronger plastic and new design with the little internal tubes on the bricks so that they snapped together more snugly.

1950s

TOWN PLAN (1955)

During the post-war boom, as Danes migrated from farms to cities, where they could increasingly afford houses and cars, Lego designers came up with an idea to create a set to make an entire urban community. The Town Plan was built with what were now being called Lego bricks, as well as other scaled toys including street signs, family automobiles, police cars and trucks. It came with a plastic cloth giving a city layout with streets and land parcels for houses and businesses.



BASIC SETS

700/0		45/0
700/1		28/6
700/3		22/0
700/3a		17/6
700/5		10/6
700/K	in wooden box	96/6
810	Town Plan set	£7.9.6
600/1	Blue & Yellow	28/6

All prices apply to U.K. only and are subject to alteration.

© LEGO Group

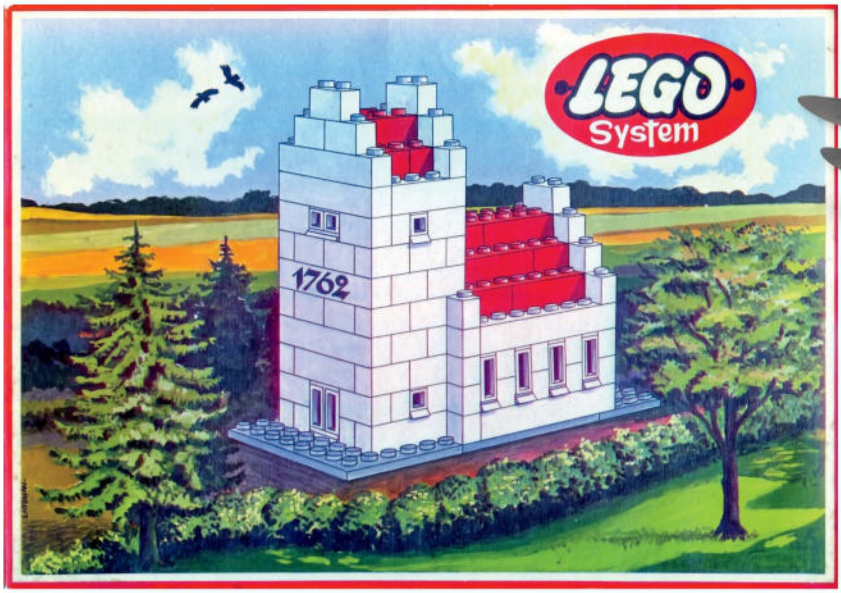
Pat. pend.

200 LEGO Town plan Board 10/9

LEGO
true building

Here is the toy for children of all ages. From each set models can be made, but if you wish to add to your collection here are pictures of some of the small supplementary sets which are available to you at your nearest toy dealer. Work out which sets you need for your own use and then plan to build up a collection of these sets. The colours which can be supplied are illustrated beneath the articles.

218 13 bricks with 8 studs 2/3d
222 40 bricks with 1 stud sq. 2/3d
226 7 beams with names 2/3d
234 30 lettered bricks 4/6d
245 1 illuminating brick 2/9d
282 22 bevelled bricks 2/3d
214/1 (4)
214/2 (5)
214/3 (5)
214/4 (6)
214/5 (7)
214/6 (8)
214/7 (10)
214/8 (10)
215 8 beams with 10 studs 2/3d
219 15 bricks with 8 studs 2/3d
223 40 bricks with 1 stud, round 2/3d
227 5 base plates 4 pieces with rounded ends 1 with square end 2/3d
237 30 numbered bricks 4/6d
280 14 bevelled bricks 2/3d
283 Angle and valley corner tiles 2/3d
216 5 beams with 20 studs 2/3d
220 20 bricks with 4 studs 2/3d
224 20 bricks curved 2/3d
228 5 base plates 4 pieces 4x8 1 piece 2x8 2/3d
235 Garage base with automatic door 3/6d
281 21 bevelled bricks 2/3d
400 4 wheels 2 axle bricks towbar and baseplate 4/6



CHURCH (1957)

A lovely little house of worship with a bell tower and roof of red tiles, this set marked the first time Lego featured a Christian church. It would also be the last. Even when the company later released medieval sets, there would be no churches as Lego steered clear of religious and political themes.

LEGO
System
LEGO

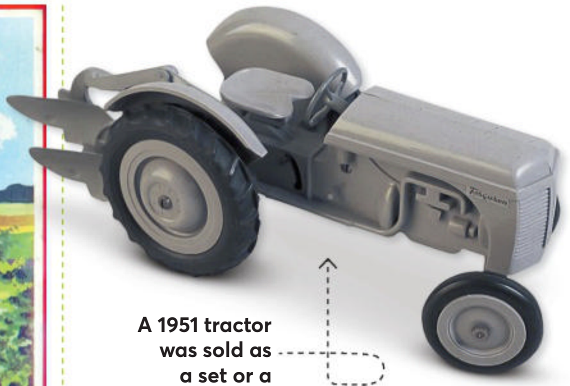
VW SHOWROOM (1957)

In a business strategy that would later prove incredibly successful, Lego struck up a licensing deal in 1957 with Volkswagen for a dealer showroom set that went with Lego's line of plastic VW cars. Two Beetles came with the set.

1960s

WHEELS (1962)

Today, the largest tire maker in the world is not Firestone or Goodyear. It's Lego. It all began with the introduction of sets of wheels, coming in two sizes—small and large—to create brick-built vehicles, one of the first being the farm tractor. Lego then phased out its preconstructed vehicles.



A 1951 tractor was sold as a set or a finished model.

TRAIN (1964)

Using the recently introduced wheels, Lego unveiled its first brick-built train sets, a nod to the little wooden trains that the company had sold for decades, with a motorized train arriving in 1966 that ran along tracks.

LEGO
System

The first movable brick-built train was a hit in 1964.

001
GEARS
LEGO
Building Toy
Children never outgrow Lego—they just build bigger and better things

GEARS (1965)

Setting the stage for robotic Lego sets years later, the first Lego gears arrived on shelves in sets that included a battery case to create moving mechanical marvels. For the most ambitious builders, the six-page instruction manual featured a Ferris wheel.

1970s

HOMEMAKER (1971)

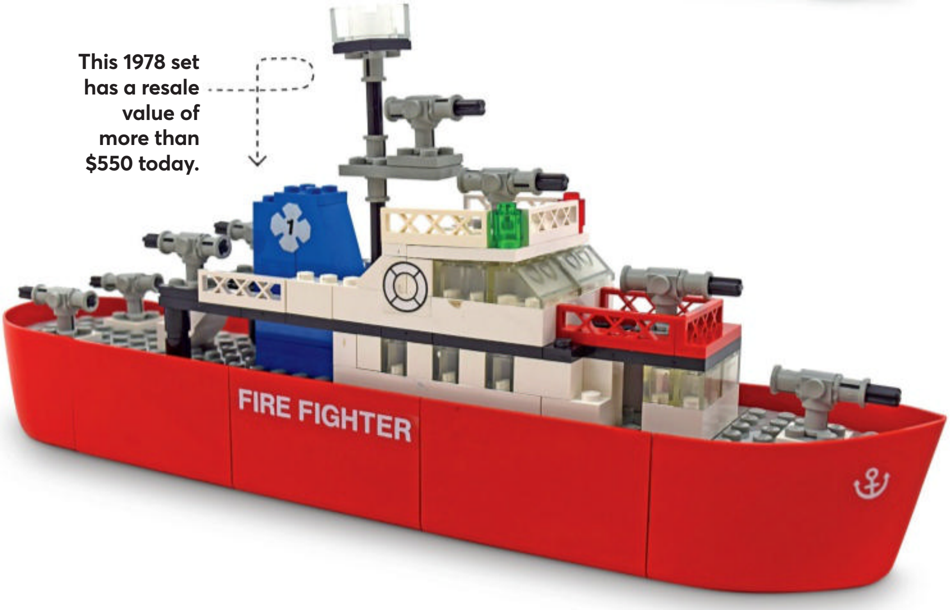
After nearly two decades of targeting primarily boys ages 7 to 12, Lego began marketing to girls. The Homemaker sets enabled them to build fully equipped houses, with bedrooms, living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens—plus sets for beauty salons and classrooms. Softer colors such as pink that would later dominate girls' sets had yet to enter the Lego color palette. The Homemaker sets maintained the standard red, white, yellow, black and blue bricks. But they did introduce an early version of people by including a headpiece (and hair attachment) that could be snapped onto a 2-by-2 brick.

LEGO
System

FIRE FIGHTER (1978)

As the 1970s progressed, Lego released a boat hull to build watercraft that could actually float, including a 133-piece firefighting boat.

This 1978 set has a resale value of more than $550 today.

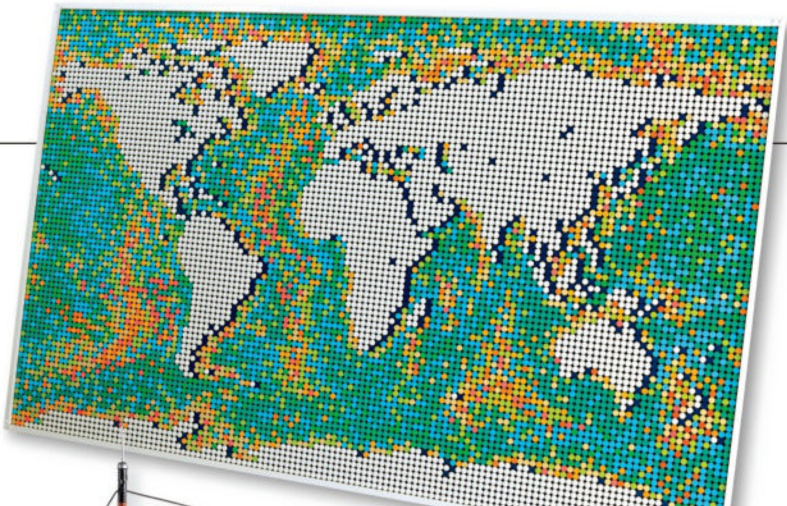


MINIFIGURES (1978)

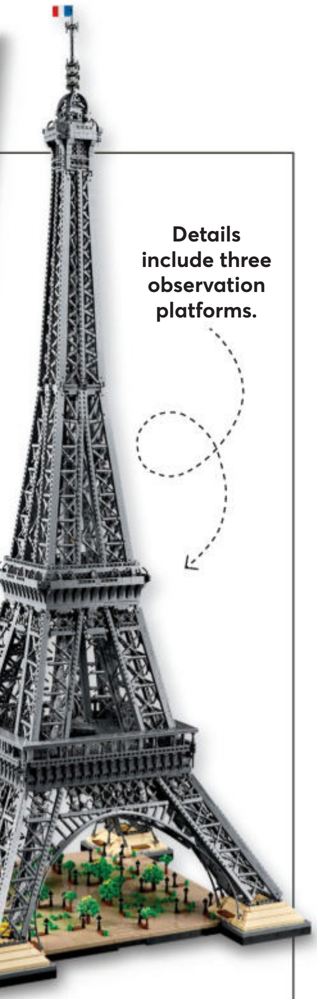
The earliest version of the Lego minifigure appeared with a little Lego policeman in the Police Car set. Quickly becoming one of Lego's most popular features, the minifigure models were also included in Castle and Space sets.

The policeman now has more details on his uniform.

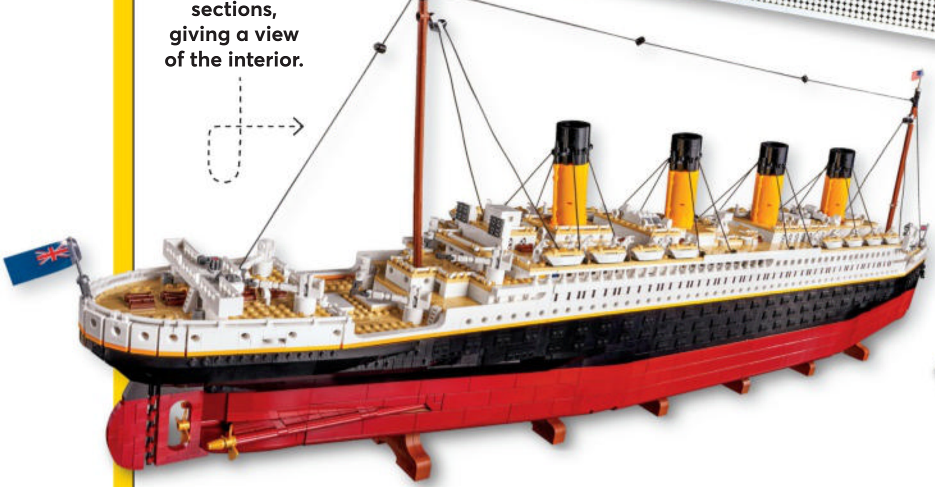
You can add pushpins for places you've visited.



Details include three observation platforms.



It splits into sections, giving a view of the interior.



The Biggest Sets

LEGO ART WORLD MAP

With 11,695 pieces, this wall-mountable map of the world tops the *Titanic* by more than 2,600 pieces and measures a sprawling 40.5 inches by 25.5 inches. The map is marketed as both a work of art, with builders encouraged to create undulating ocean waves and use vibrant colors, and an educational tool, with an audio soundtrack of stories by world travelers that can be listened to during construction. At $250, the set is considered a bargain, with a low per-piece rate of 2 cents.

TITANIC

At 53 inches long, the 1:200-scale model of the doomed ocean liner is larger than the Art World Map, and with 9,090 parts, is a beast of a project. The model features all the luxury accoutrements, including cabins, lifeboats, boiler room and grand staircase, with a price tag to match: $680.

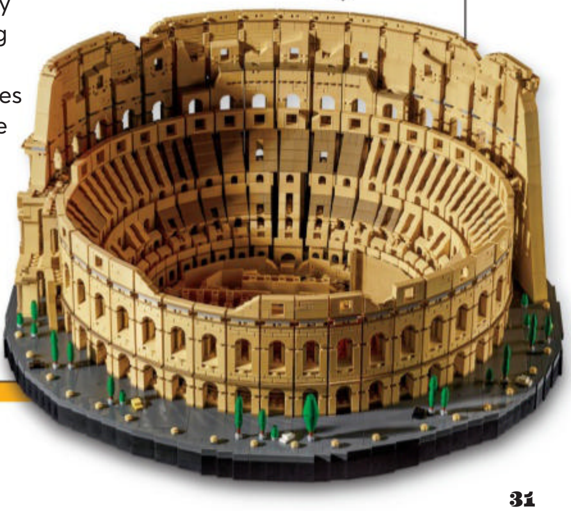
EIFFEL TOWER

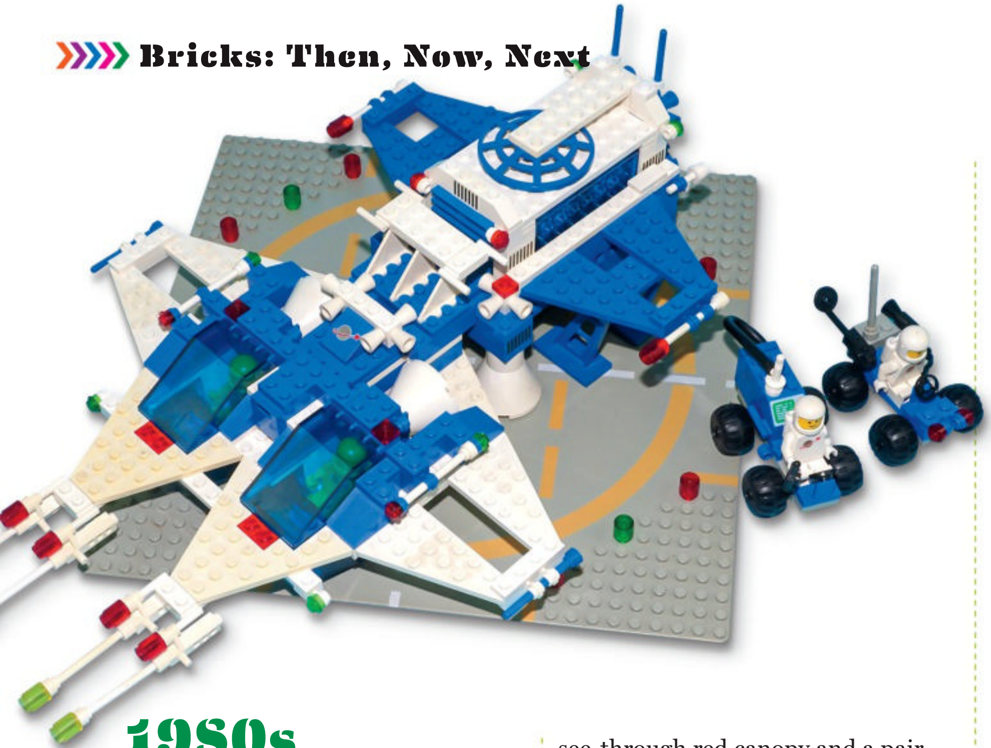
The tallest Lego set ever, the Eiffel Tower is bigger than many of the kids who play with Lego. But with 10,001 pieces (and a $630 price tag) this 5-foot-tall sculpture from Lego's Icons line—which also includes the *Titanic*, the Colosseum, and a vintage Atari 2600 console—is definitely a job for the grown-ups. Finding a place to display it may be a challenge, though the tower does break into four sections for ease of movement.

COLOSSEUM

Get a lesson in ancient architecture with this 10.5-inch-high, 20.5 inch-wide model of the Roman amphitheater. The 9,036-piece set, priced at $550, replicates the original design and features of the Colosseum, down to the three shades of brick. As designer Rok Zgalin Kobe said, "The more the model was being perfected, the more pieces went into capturing its details."

It also has the hypogeum under the arena floor.





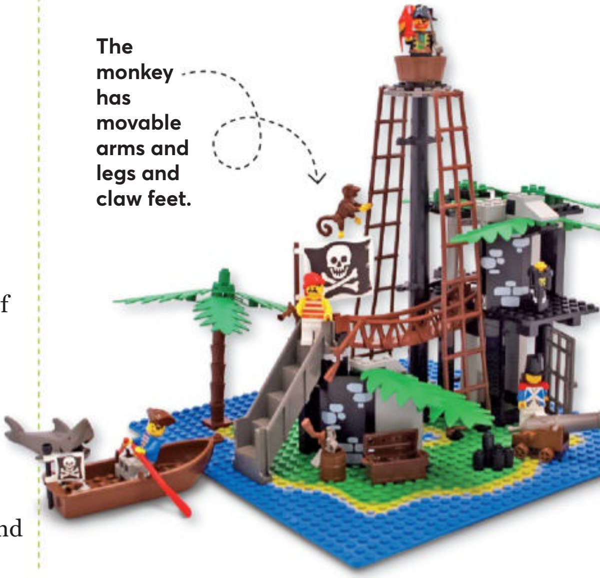
1980s

GALAXY COMMANDER (1983)

Before Lego snagged the rights to *Star Wars*, the company cranked out impressive space-themed sets featuring upgraded minifigures. The 121-piece Galactic Peace Keeper (1989) sent two minifigures—an astronaut and a space cop—into outer space on a sleek ship with a see-through red canopy and a pair of laser guns on expandable arms. But it was the 427-piece Galaxy Commander that first had legions of amateur space explorers enthralled with its twin cockpit, a lab module with a folding roof, two rovers, and five astronaut figures. Both craft could swoop down to the 202-piece Space Supply Station (1983) with computer screens, dish antennas, and two loading skids.

FORBIDDEN ISLAND (1989)

Bring on the pirates! Minifigures advanced in leaps and bounds with this blockbuster seller featuring a palm frond-covered pirate hideout complete with a rope bridge, Jolly Roger flag, cannon, climbing monkey, parrot and three pirates, highlighted by Captain Redbeard with a hooked hand, saber and red whiskers.

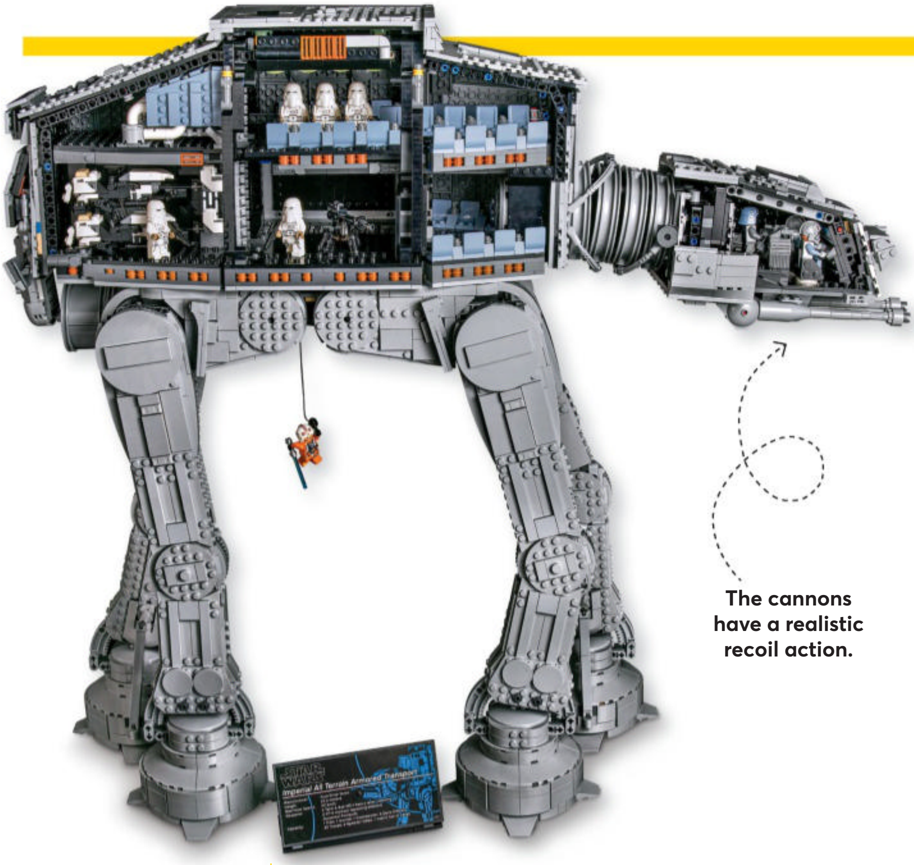


The monkey has movable arms and legs and claw feet.

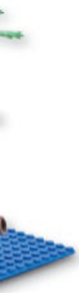
The Most Expensive Set

A *STAR WARS* FAN'S DREAM BUILD.

You'll need more than The Force to build classic Lego models from the *Star Wars* movies. A fat wallet is also required. With a retail price of $850, the 6,785-piece AT-AT set from 2021, with Luke Skywalker as well as eight other minifigures, ties with the 2017 reissue of the Millennium Falcon as the most expensive set on shelves. Expect the price to skyrocket on the secondary market when Lego retires the AT-AT set in 2024.



The cannons have a realistic recoil action.



1990s

AIR TECH CLAW RIG (1992)

The 954-piece set from Lego's more advanced Technic line took the 1980s motor-driven pneumatic pump features and dialed them up to 11. With a tome of an instruction book coming in at 60 pages, the Air Tech Claw Rig is a truck with a V6 engine, two horns and that real-working grabber on the back.

NEPTUNE DISCOVERY LAB—AQUA DOME 7 (1995)

The 1990s sent Lego designers to the most exotic destinations ever, with bigger and more elaborate castles and pirate settlements. Then came this stroke of brick inspiration: an underwater science lab. One of the most prized sets for collectors (Lego has stopped making underwater-themed sets) the 492-piece set puts air helmets on the minifigures as they prowl the deep with the help of a yellow submarine. Just watch out for that gray octopus.

The lab set had a submarine, conveyor belt and crane.

2000s

ULTIMATE COLLECTOR'S MILLENNIUM FALCON (2007)

The late 1990s licensing deal with *Star Wars* may have saved Lego from bankruptcy when little else was selling, and this 2007 classic shows why. The 7,541-piece Millennium Falcon leaves all those castles and pirate ships in its rocket engine wake in terms of sophistication, artistry and challenging construction. Han Solo's smuggler craft was the largest Lego set to date, until it was surpassed the following year by the towering 5,922-piece Taj Mahal.

Removable hull panels reveal the cool interior.

"The more Lego bricks you have doesn't mean you're going to be more creative," said former Lego CEO Jørgen Vig Knudstorp.

LEGO
4-99
10662
ZOO
6032408

HOW THEY'RE MADE

WITH PRECISION THAT WOULD BE THE ENVY OF THE SPACE INDUSTRY, LEGO BRICKS ROLL OFF THE ASSEMBLY LINE BY THE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS.

The building blocks of Lego bricks are little granules with a big name. They fill towering silos outside factories in Denmark, Hungary, Mexico, the Czech Republic, China and, soon, Vietnam, in the first stage of a highly automated, precise process that produces Lego. An oil-rich polymer with the chemical name of acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, or ABS for short, these granules are shot from the two-story storage silos through pipes to machines that soften the material into a plasticky sludge under temperatures of 450 F.

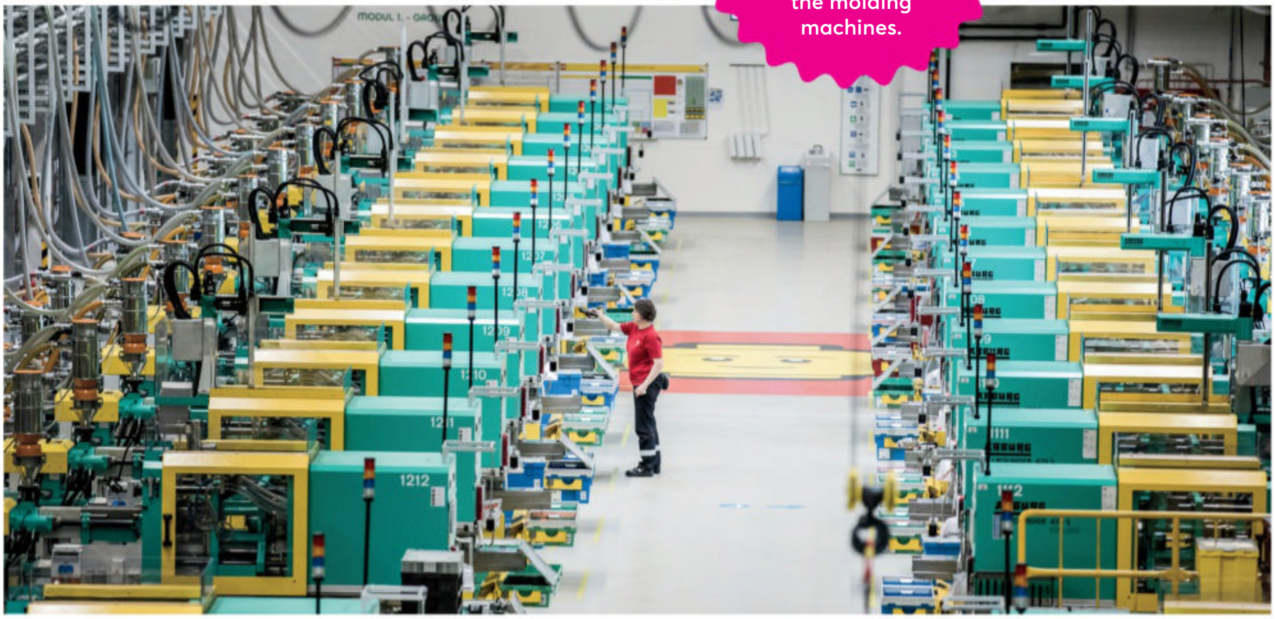
The goo then goes into custom molds that exert 150 tons of pressure and add coloring and a little water to cool things off. Out pops a warm brick that is both fun to play with and a manufacturing marvel, measuring to within .002 mm of tolerance, or proper dimension.

That's a fraction of the thickness of a piece of paper, which is why Lego pieces snap together so snugly, assemble with such strength, and pull apart with such ease. The miracle material ABS—strong, durable and nonbiodegradable (see sidebar, page 36)—ensures that the bricks stay that way for generations.

"We're molding to the tolerance of about one to two microns,

Work It

An employee is shown inspecting the molding machines.



Lego recommends passing on old bricks to others.

Will Legos Ever Be Recyclable?

Legos do, in fact, pretty much last forever, which is a good thing if you want to play with them for generations, but a problem for the environment. The durable ABS plastic granules (below) that comprise 80% of the pieces don't biodegrade. And with billions of ABS bricks coming off Lego assembly lines each year, that's a lot of forever material for the world's landfills. Lego has invested more than $150 million into finding a green alternative which still has the strength and snap-ability of ABS that has made the bricks so successful. The company has set the year 2030 as the goal for a new plastic, which may come from recycled drink bottles.

less than the thickness of a human hair," Tim Brooks, vice president of corporate responsibility at Lego, told *Wired*. "That's incredibly precise compared to most consumer products. To get that brick to mold effectively is hard. To go into the mold in about the consistency of toothpaste—pushing it in warm and then cooling it down—the material will shrink; you need it not to shrink too much."

Lego uses about 7,000 different kinds of molds—they cost an average of about $72,000 and go as high as $360,000—for about four weeks before they're taken offline for cleaning. Old molds aren't discarded but sealed into the foundations of the factories so that competitors can't steal the designs. In all, the molds create 2,350 types of elements in 52 different colors. Out of some 36 billion bricks produced each year, about 80% are made of ABS.

After being molded, the bricks go onto a conveyor and are dumped into a bin. Robots are alerted when the bins are full and, moving across grooves in the factory floor, deliver the pieces to the assembly halls. Here, machines imprint the various

No Waste

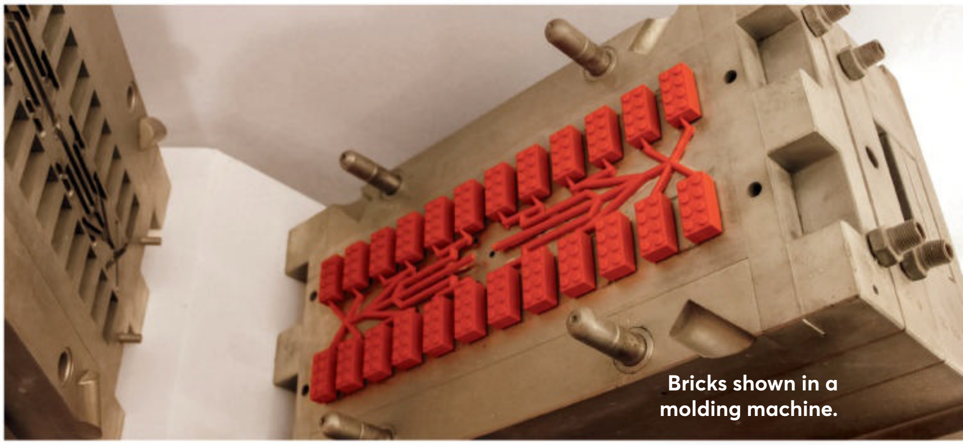
Leftover plastic pushed out of the molds is ground down and put back into the production cycle.

designs on the pieces, including words, faces, numbers and other decorations. For the minifigures, robotic grippers take the head/torso pieces down an assembly line to be fitted with arms and legs and other parts. Nearly all minifigures are purposely colored bright yellow to avoid giving them a specific ethnicity, though figures based on movies or TV shows are molded in the approximate skin tone of the actors.

Along the way, Lego pieces undergo a battery of quality control tests, but the manufacturing process is so precise that only about 18 out of every 1 million pieces get rejected.

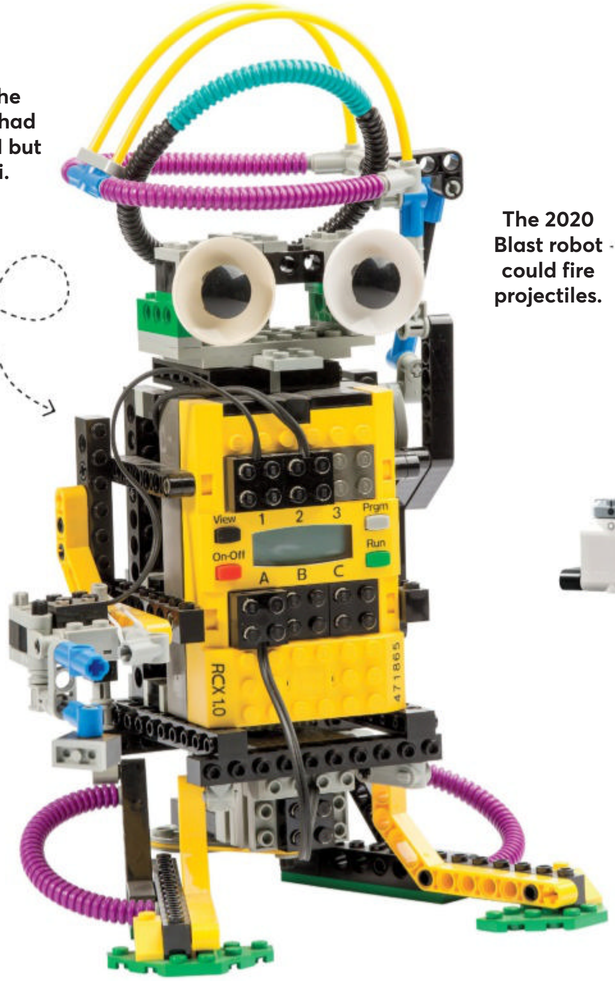
When completed, the pieces are automatically dropped into polypropylene bags, weighed for accuracy and sent off for packaging. The pieces go into separate bags so that if something is off, only individual bags are replaced rather than an entire set.

Machines assemble the cardboard boxes and drop in the bags—if things don't quite fit, an actual human will come to the rescue to give it a nudge—then the boxes are automatically sealed and piled onto pallets. Shrink-wrap seals the stacks of boxes, and the stack is shipped to the primary distribution center in Prague for shipment around the world.

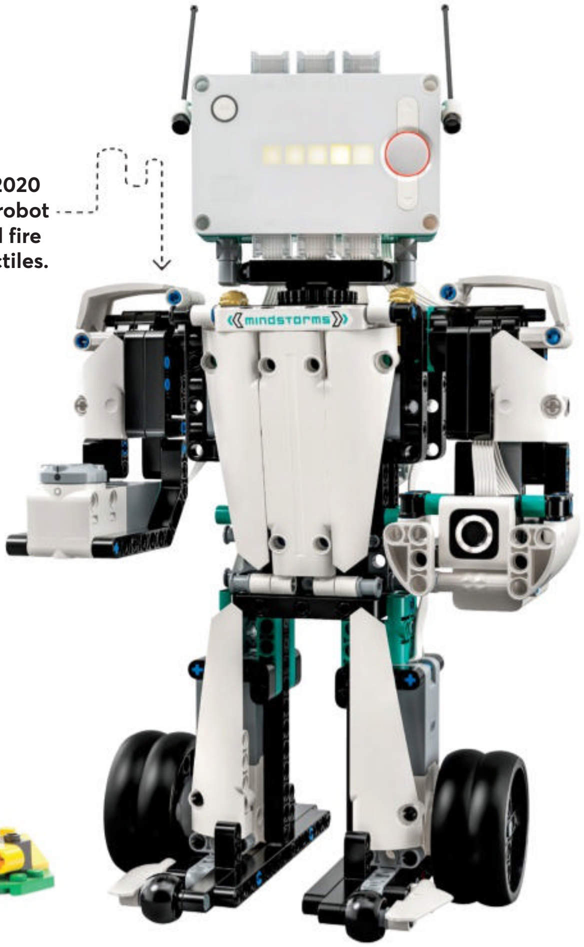

Bricks shown in a molding machine.

Heads are stamped with facial expressions before the minifigures are fully assembled.

An employee scoops parts to be printed for Duplo figurines.



In 1998, the RCX brick had 32K of RAM but no Wi-Fi.



The 2020 Blast robot could fire projectiles.

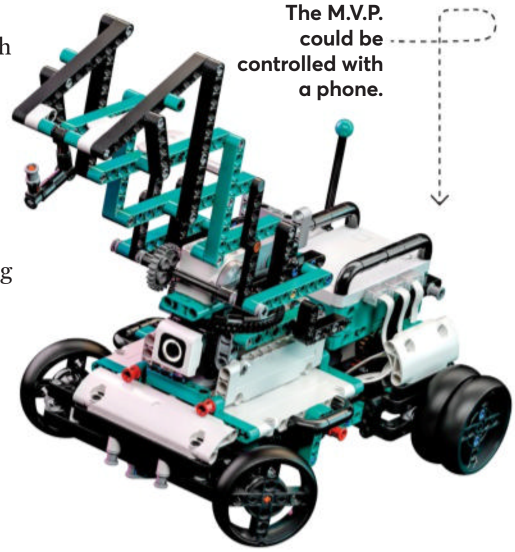
RIP LEGO ROBOTS

THE COMPANY HAS PULLED THE PLUG ON ITS LONG-RUNNING HIGH-TECH MINDSTORMS LINES.

Launched in 1998, Lego's Mindstorms kit wedded the tactile joys of plastic bricks with the wonders of digital innovations to create robots and inspire generations to pursue careers in STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

Though marketed to children, adult hobbyists scooped up the $199 sets, quietly making it one of the company's top-sellers. Over the years, Lego released upgraded versions, such as the 2006 Mindstorms NXT kit for $250 that introduced a new robot brain brick and which made the bots more advanced than ever.

As *Wired* magazine observed, "The market is almost evenly split between parents buying the kit for their budding engineers and grown-up geeks who build Mindstorms robots that can scale walls, solve Rubik's Cubes, or pick blue M&Ms out of a pile."



The M.V.P. could be controlled with a phone.

Many kids learned how to code via Lego robotics.

Builders had to wait another seven years for the next generation, Mindstorms EV3, which could be controlled by smart devices and featured new sensors and other nifty upgrades. Yet another seven years later, 2020's $360 Mindstorms Robot Inventor kit allowed builders to make five different robots, including one that could give high-fives.

With such slow rollouts, the fact that nothing new in the Mindstorms line had been released in the past two years hardly caused a stir. So it came as a shock when Lego pulled the plug on Mindstorms at the end of 2022, releasing a statement to the industry blog Brickset: "We have decided to focus our resources and future plans by redirecting our Mindstorms Robot Inventor team and their expertise into different areas of the business," it said.

The App Lives!

The Mindstorms Robot Inventor app will be live until at least the end of 2024.

As the death of the bots began to sink in, Mindstorms fans began to grieve and reminisce. "Sad to hear," one commenter wrote on Brickset's post. "Mindstorms has been around for a generation in its various forms, and lots of '80s and '90s kids have entered STEM careers, thanks in part to these products."

Along with the fun and mental challenges of the Mindstorms kits, the products played an important educational role in STEM learning. Lego once partnered with MIT to sell the kits to schools, and many careers began with Lego.

But as Brickset and other Lego blogs noted, the Mindstorms kits had failed to keep up with the times. The latest set was seen as a technological step backward, and builders both young and older turned to other more advanced—and in many cases cheaper—sets from competing companies.

"Wipe away those tears; there are still lots of educational robot toys left in the world," wrote the gadget blog Gizmodo after Lego's announcement. These include Sphero's *Star Wars* droid-inspired programmable rolling ball called BOLT; a robotic cyborg hand from Thames & Kosmos; a golf-ball–size robot with a lot of personality from Ozobot; and a $400 robot from Digital Dream Labs that can "roam around a desk and serve as a virtual pet that likes to play games."

In its statement, Lego insisted it has "a number of priorities in Lego Education and other Build & Code experiences." And keep in mind: You can't really kill a robot. "We are continuing to hold on to the trademark for the Mindstorms brand and assessing our future plans," the company added.

Also Say Goodbye To...

MORE FAVORITES ARE BEING RETIRED.

Lego sets come and go as the company tries to keep its toy line new and exciting. According to the Lego website, some sets getting retired include the *Friends* TV show's Central Perk coffee house set, the 1,673-piece sculptures of Harry Potter and Hermione Granger, the $200 Batwing from the 1989 movie *Batman*, and an Adidas sport shoe model with "real shoelaces."

There are lots of other *Harry Potter* sets available.

Duplo sets include family pets such as dogs.

Duplo can help kids gain both fine and gross motor skills.

BIGGER PIECES FOR LITTLER BUILDERS

THE HISTORY OF DUPLO, LIKE THAT OF LEGO, FEATURES SOME UPS AND DOWNS.

From the very beginning, when Lego rolled out its Lego brick forerunner called the Automatic Binding Bricks in 1950, the company wanted to expand its toy line with bricks that small hands could handle but were big enough that they wouldn't get stuck in little windpipes.

Marketed as "the perfect bricks for day care centers," the first larger-size bricks in the early 1950s came in packages with photos of Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, the grandson of Lego's founder Ole Kirk Kristiansen (and the future head of the Lego empire).

But these early toddler bricks had a problem: they couldn't be snapped together with the smaller, modern Legos. That left the larger bricks as a stand-alone product as the minds at Lego pondered how they could integrate bigger, safer bricks into the larger Lego ecosystem.

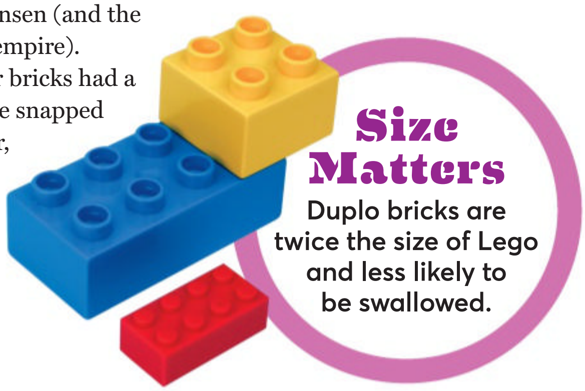
In the early 1960s, Lego experimented with different designs, developing bricks that were two, three and four times larger than standard Lego, before settling on the 2:1 ratio brick. Lego also figured out that if they hollowed out the Duplo top studs, they could snap in the standard Legos.

Thus in 1969, Lego unveiled the Duplo bricks, taken from the Latin word "duplus," or double. They came in four colors—red, yellow, blue and white—and were marketed to children from 18 months to 5 years old.

"By making sure that all Lego elements, old or new, are compatible," Lego said, "the company can prolong the life of and add value to existing Lego bricks—and instead of users discarding their old bricks when they buy a new Lego set, they add value to the bricks they already have."

Parents quickly embraced Duplo as both a toy and a learning tool, as toddlers developed motor skills and expanded their imaginations creating new projects and worlds with familiar sights such as cars and houses.

Duplo minifigures joined the toy line, similar to the Lego figures but larger, with heads and limbs that remained attached. A Duplo railroad



Size Matters

Duplo bricks are twice the size of Lego and less likely to be swallowed.

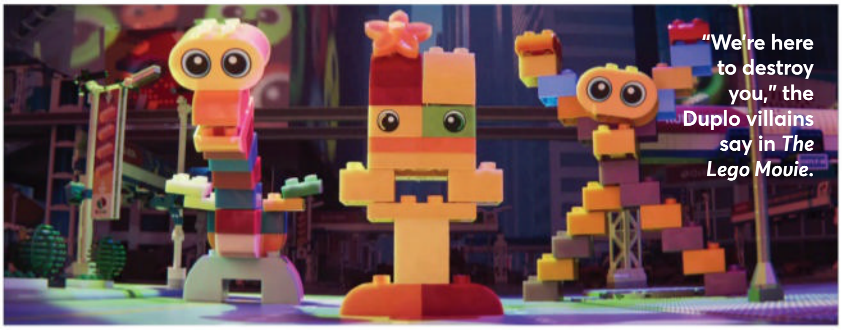
steam engine with rail cars, and a Duplo dollhouse with sliding doors and a nuclear Duplo family of father, mother and child also came aboard.

In the early 2000s, Lego took the educational aspect of the brick a step further and renamed the toy line Explore. Lego seemed to have the best of intentions, stressing the toy line's benefits in early child development. But the rebrand turned out to be one of many missteps during Lego's corporate dark ages, confusing customers familiar with Duplo and causing sales to slump.

By 2004, the Duplo name and rabbit logo were back "as a response to the repeated feedback the company receives from consumers and retailers." The toddler bricks rebounded, along with the rest of The Lego Group's products.

Duplo unveiled sets based on popular kid shows *Bob the Builder* and *Thomas & Friends*, along with Duplo versions of Lego's popular Castle, Pirate and Town lines. And in 2014, Duplo got a joking cameo in *The Lego Movie* as Duplo-constructed aliens threatened the people of Bricksburg.

Today, the main factory in Hungary cranks out more than 2 million parts a day that go into 14 million Duplo boxes shipped each year, and a new generation of parents is charmed by the toys they grew up with.



"We're here to destroy you," the Duplo villains say in *The Lego Movie.*

OUCH!

WHY DOES IT HURT SO MUCH TO STEP ON A LEGO?

IT ALL COMES DOWN TO PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY AND STATISTICS.

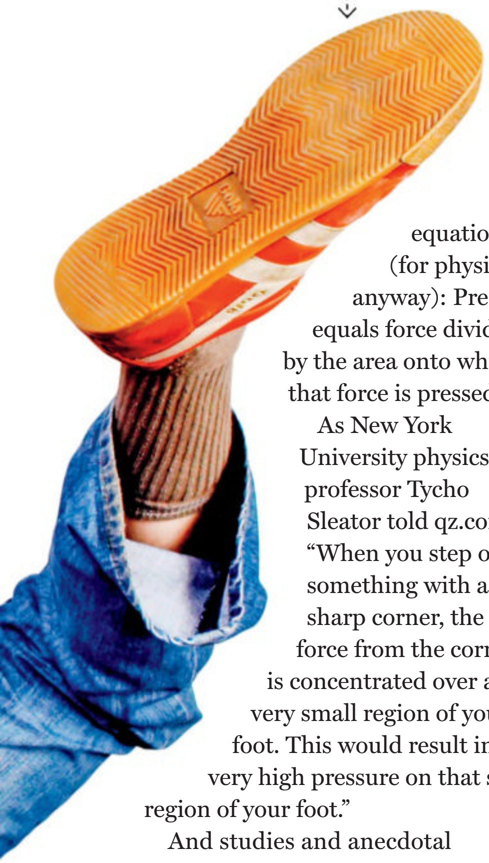
Every parent has been there. They're walking through the house in socks or bare feet and suddenly step on something hard and sharp that sends a stabbing pain through their entire body.

The culprit? A Lego brick. But why does this particular piece of plastic hurt so much?

Several factors come into play. For one, the foot is incredibly sensitive, with as many as 200,000 individual sensory receptors, which explains why you can tickle somebody's feet as opposed to, say, their elbow. The foot needs all those nerves to help maintain balance. Another is the chemical makeup of Lego. About 80% of Lego parts, including all of the bricks, are made from acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS) plastic, a polymer that lasts forever and has a hard finish and sharp edges. And since a Lego piece can withstand 950 pounds of pressure, unless you're 1,000 pounds, that brick isn't going to bend, break or crumble under your weight.

The pain that results from stepping on a Lego brick with bare feet can be explained by a simple physics

Wearing shoes helps to lessen the impact of Lego bricks on sensitive soles.



equation (for physicists, anyway): Pressure equals force divided by the area onto which that force is pressed.

As New York University physics professor Tycho Sleator told qz.com, “When you step on something with a sharp corner, the force from the corner is concentrated over a very small region of your foot. This would result in a very high pressure on that small region of your foot.”

And studies and anecdotal accounts confirm it really does hurt. A lot. Scott Bell is in the Guinness World Records for the longest-ever barefoot walk over hot coals—250 feet of embers at 1,200 degrees—and regularly walks across broken glass. But even a guy like him with feet of asbestos shudders each time he’s asked to do a third challenge, a daredevil stunt called a Lego Firewalk in which people walk barefoot across Lego pieces.

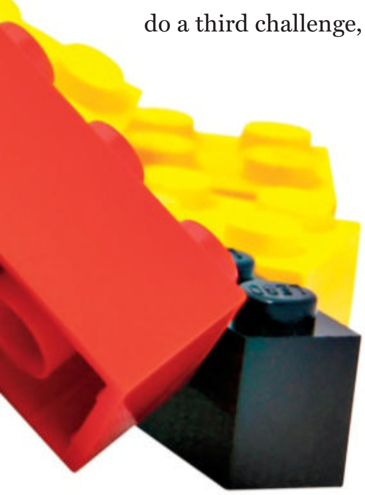
“Out of the three that I do on a regular basis, it’s before I step on the Lego that I think, ‘Oh, this is going to be a bit uncomfortable,’” he said with a laugh to *Smithsonian* magazine.

The final reason for the Lego vs. foot phenomenon is the sheer number of the little bricks in circulation. Lego cranks out billions of bricks a year. Some estimates hold there’s enough Legos on the planet to give each person 83 bricks. And if you have kids (or play with Legos yourself), you might as well resign yourself to pain.

Of course, Legos can cause harm, and even kill. Choking is a leading cause of injury and death for children younger than 4 years of age. Most incidents involve food, coins and toys, including Legos. In 2016, a 3-year-old boy in England playing Lego with his brother died after a small Lego piece got lodged in his throat. But such fatalities are exceedingly rare, and Lego has the line of larger, toddler-safe bricks called Duplo for younger kids (see page 40).

Meanwhile, in 2020, a 7-year-old boy in New Zealand blew a tiny Lego claw out of his nose after it had been stuck up there for almost two years. “It was itchy,” Sameer Anwar said. Four years earlier, a nurse found a piece of Lego lodged in an 11-year-old boy’s ear after he failed a hearing test.

Those isolated cases aside, it’s the feet that generally suffer. It happens so much that a popular meme for a curse goes: “I hope you step on a Lego.” Comedian Steve Rannazzisi quipped in a routine that Legos are like cockroaches: “Where you see one, there’s 10 more hiding out in the shadows. You don’t even know we’re there. So now you’re hopping up and down on one leg trying to figure out, and then all your weight lands on top of that second Lego and your brain is like, ‘Shut this s--t down!’ I hit the floor. I was crying, tears streaming down my face…I thought I was dead.”



Nope!

Performer Bazoo the Kloun said he would rather walk on broken glass than Legos.

In 2022, British TV star Jacqueline Jossa walked over 30,000 Lego pieces to raise money for charity.

IF NOT LEGO, THEN WHAT?

THEY MAY BE THE BIGGEST GAME IN TOY TOWN, BUT THEY'RE NOT THE ONLY BRICKMAKER. HERE ARE SOME OF THE BEST-KNOWN COMPETITORS.

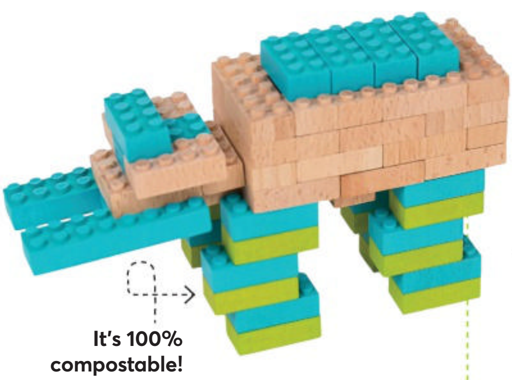
Mega Bloks has a licensing deal with Dora the Explorer.

Mattel Mega Bloks

Lego's closest competitor, Mega Bloks, ranks second in the world's sales of toy construction building sets, with 11% of the market share. Founded in Canada by husband and wife Victor and Rita Bertrand, the company took on the mighty Lego in the 1980s with a line of blocks that became popular, particularly in the United States and Canada, though its smaller version ran afoul of Lego's lawyers in a long-running case ultimately won by Mega Bloks (see page 46). Marketed to toddlers as "easy-to-grip and easy-to-stack," the bricks are big and brightly colored with huge studs on top.

Mattel purchased the company in 2014 for $405 million and quickly went head-to-head with Lego via an American Girl line that competed with Lego's Friends sets. The company's Junior Builders vies with Duplo—the competing bricks even interlock—and Mega's Micro Bloks can snap into regular Legos. Mega struck licensing deals with such popular properties as Thomas the Tank Engine, Pokémon and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

It also sells itself as more environmentally friendly: While Lego is still seeking to release a line of recyclable bricks, Mattel debuted Mega Bloks Green Town sets in 2022, the first-ever toy line available at mass retail to be certified CarbonNeutral, for kids ages 1 and up. The Build & Learn Eco House and the Grow & Protect Farm are made from a minimum of 56% plant-based materials. Mega then purchased carbon offsets from the Darkwoods Forest Conservation project in Canada and packaged the sets in recyclable paper and paperboard with soy-based inks.



It's 100% compostable!

Once-Kids

To really get back to nature, this company makes building bricks that they say are 100% compatible with what the company coyly calls "major brands"—i.e. Lego. That's pretty impressive, seeing as Once-Kids are made out of wood. "Because all of our products are sourced from natural resources," the company says, "Wood Bricks will biodegrade and go back into the earth." Sustainability does come with a cost: A 250-brick set is $120. The line also serves up this dash of irony: Lego started out as a wooden toy company.

Hasbro Kre-O

Made by South Korean-based Oxford and sold by Hasbro, the Kre-O construction sets debuted in 2011 and now can be assembled into *Transformers*, *G.I. Joe*, *Trolls*, *Star Trek* and even Dungeons & Dragons characters. Named after the Latin word "creo," for "I create," the bricks are compatible with both Lego and Mega Bloks.

5
3
4
3
3
4
ORC Flagman
2

The D&D set has a buildable, firing weapon.

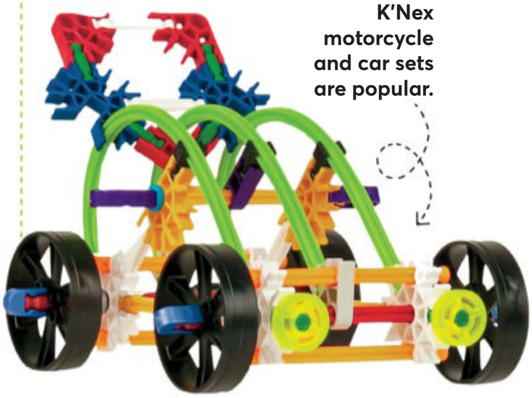
Cobi sells World War II tank models including this Soviet SPG.

Cobi

The Polish building block company goes where Lego has never ventured, with realistic military sets to make Jeeps, warships and fighter jets—a market Lego likely won't ever embrace. "From the very beginning, this line has been the key product in our lineup," company official Aleksandra Niewierkiewicz told *The New York Times*. "We try and develop categories that don't compete directly with our competition, which is why this continues to be such a strong category."

K'Nex

A system of interlocking gears, wheels, rods and, yes, blocks, these sets from Florida-based Basic Fun! emerged as an idea cooked up by founder Joel Glickman, who looked at a straw while attending a wedding and wondered what he could build with it. Apparently a whole lot, as K'Nex can now be made into everything from a stick figure to an elaborate roller coaster. The sets come in versions for both 5 to 12-year-olds and toddlers.



K'Nex motorcycle and car sets are popular.

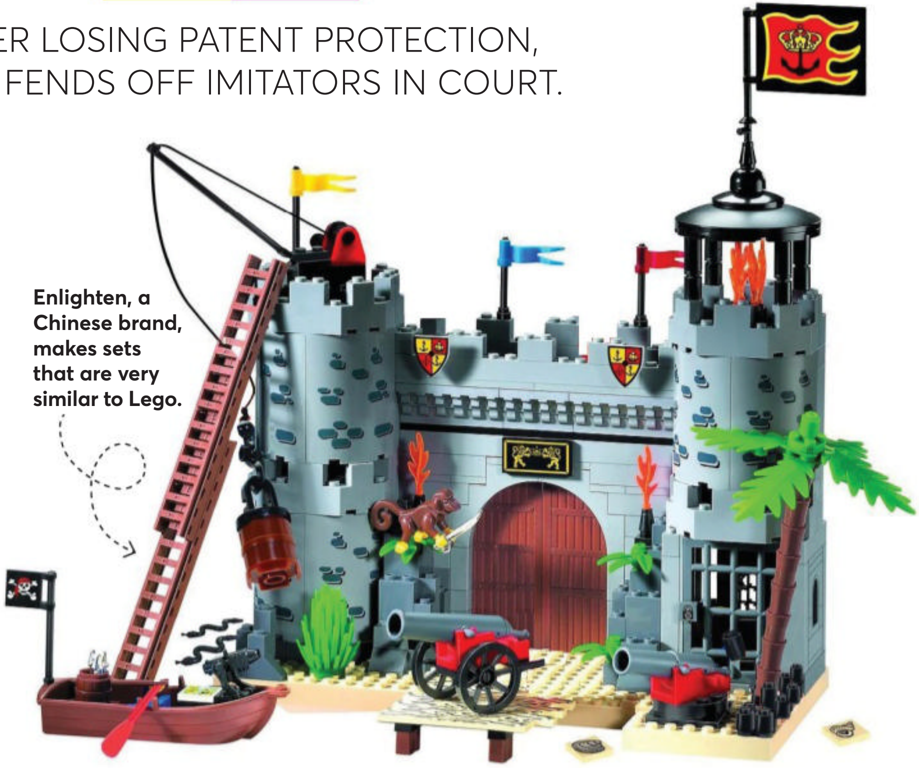
Lego itself originally copied Kiddicraft bricks created by British toymaker Hilary Page in the 1940s.

ATTACK OF THE CLONES!

AFTER LOSING PATENT PROTECTION, LEGO FENDS OFF IMITATORS IN COURT.

Sometimes, the fun-and-games business isn't all fun and games. While Lego may have literally patented the industry-leading building brick, its patent protections expired decades ago, allowing other companies to create their own bricks advertised as "compatible" with Legos. With billions of dollars at stake, Lego has gone to court to fight against Lego clones, with mixed success.

In the 1980s, Lego sparred with Tyco Industries for years over Tyco's Super Blocks, ending with Tyco being ordered to stop using slogans such



Enlighten, a Chinese brand, makes sets that are very similar to Lego.

as "Lego, but only cheaper," but still being allowed to continue making the bricks. "We're delighted with the outcome," a Lego lawyer told the *Washington Post*. "If Tyco is forced to market its blocks honestly and truthfully, we believe we'll beat the pants off them."

Lego also took on Mega Bloks, arguing that its design using studs and tubes violated Lego trademarks. In the early 2000s, courts in Canada and Europe handed mega victories to Mega Bloks, allowing the company to keep on selling. Today, Mega Bloks are Lego's biggest, though still distant, competitor.

Bela was ordered to stop copying Lego's packaging and logos.

Best-Lock has been involved in multiple cases with Lego.

Also in the early 2000s, Lego scored a victory in a lawsuit against Best-Lock for violating the trademark of Lego's minifigures. The court found that Best-Lock products are "indistinguishable" from Lego's. "A comparison of the works makes clear that Best-Lock has copied protectable, expressive elements that are original to Lego," the court stated.

Lego won a 2017 copyright infringement lawsuit against two Chinese companies that sold toys called Bela that were nearly identical to Lego's Friends line of blocks. A Lego company official hailed the decision for putting Lego "in a better legal position acting against infringement of Lego trademarks."

"We see this as a recognition of our status in China as a known and loved brand by parents and children," the official said, adding this warning: "We will continue to take action globally when we see attempts to mislead consumers and infringement of our trademarks and copyrights."

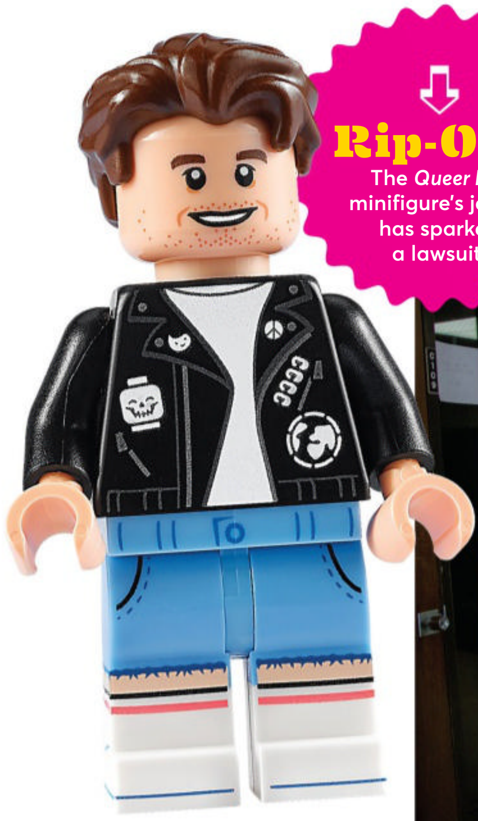
The company also scored a victory over the Chinese clone brand Lepin. The counterfeiters were fined $13 million for copyright infringement in 2020 and XinhuaNet reported that the "chief culprit" was sentenced to six years in prison, while eight others were also imprisoned.

More recently, The Lego Group found itself on the other end of a copyright case when fashion designer James Concannon filed suit in 2022 alleging that Lego modeled a "blatant copy" of one of Concannon's jackets without his permission.

The offending garment, the lawsuit alleges, can be found in the Queer Eye—The Fab 5 Loft Lego set on the teeny-tiny minifigure based on cast member Antoni Porowski, who has been wearing Concannon's designs since 2017.

"Lego did not offer to compensate Concannon for copying his creation, did not ask Concannon's permission to copy his creation, and did not give Concannon any credit when it did copy his creation," says the lawsuit.

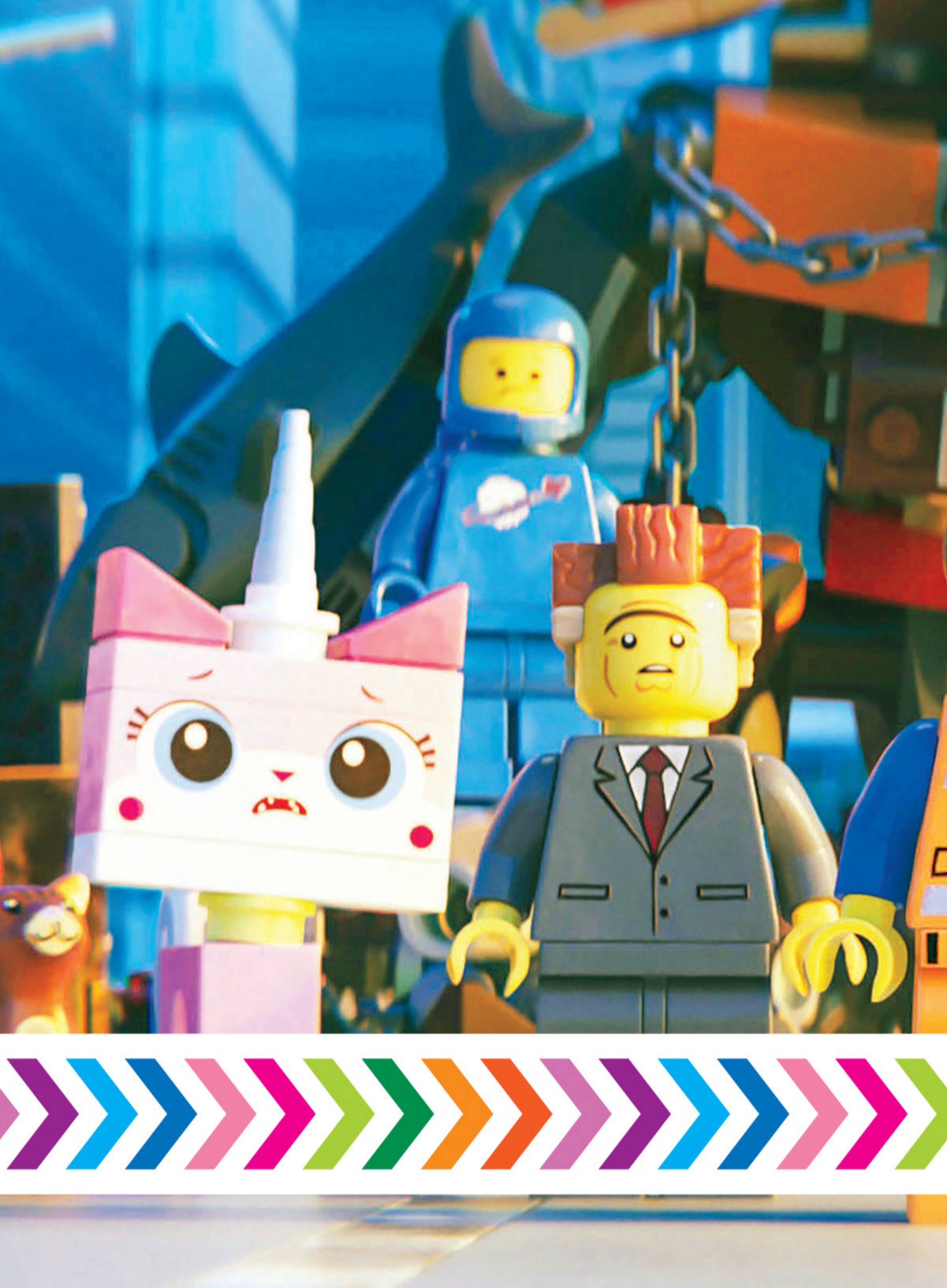
Instead, Concannon alleges, Lego offered as compensation a free Fab 5 Loft set, worth $100, for his 6-year-old son. According to news reports, Lego had not commented. The case is still in litigation as of press time.



Rip-Off?

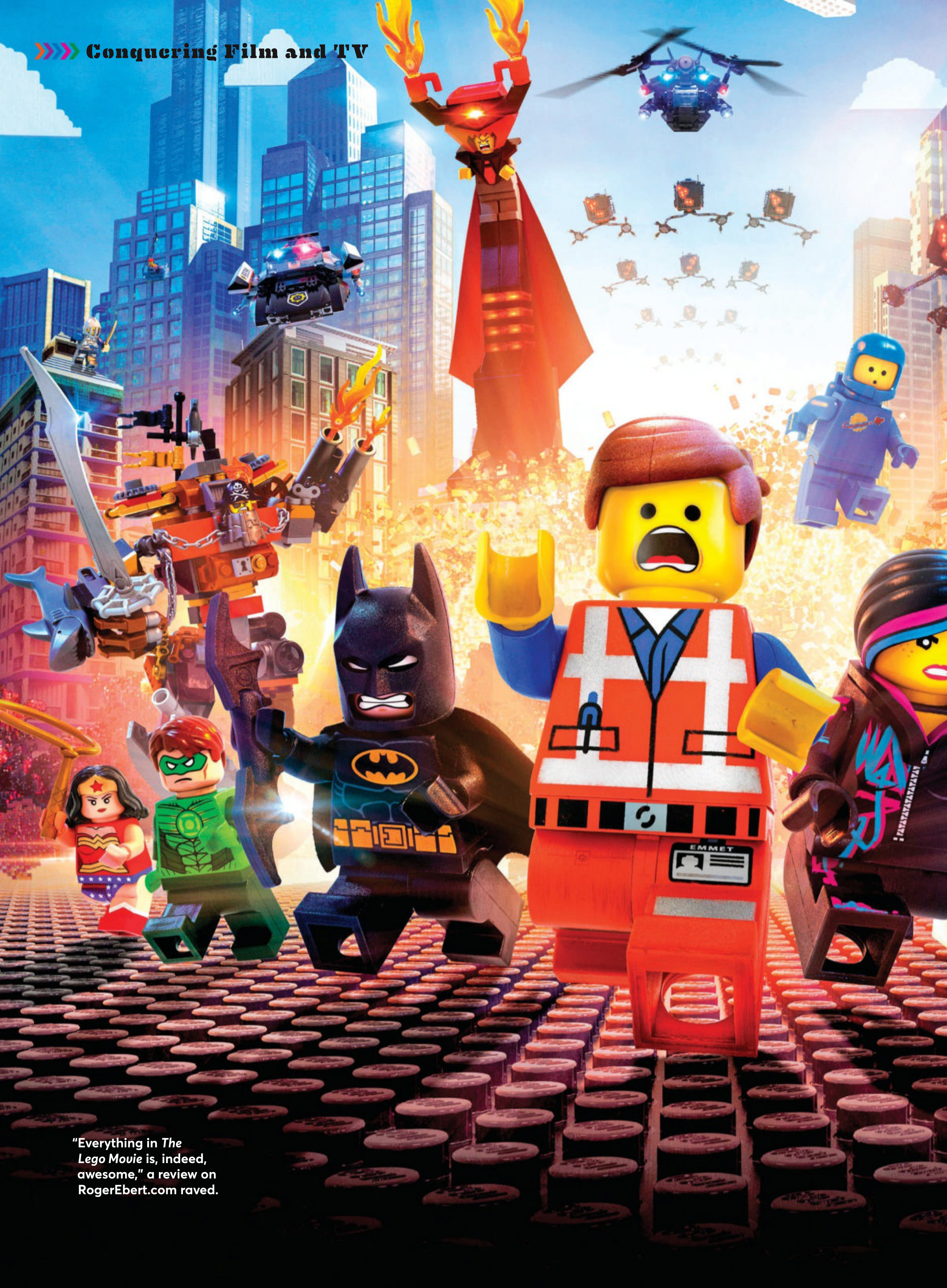
The *Queer Eye* minifigure's jacket has sparked a lawsuit.

Antoni Porowski (second from left) wearing his James Concannon jacket.



CONQUERING FILM AND TV

LEGO USES THE CONSTRUCTION SETS AS THE FOUNDATION FOR A REALITY SHOW AND A MEGA-HIT MOVIE FRANCHISE.



"Everything in *The Lego Movie* is, indeed, awesome," a review on RogerEbert.com raved.

BUILDING A HIT MOVIE FRANCHISE

FROM BRICKS TO BLOCKBUSTERS, HOW LEGO INSPIRED A POPULAR BIG-SCREEN SERIES.

For years, executives at Lego listened to movie pitches. And for years the ideas, to coin an appropriate phrase, didn't stack up.

"We are not an entertainment company," Mads Nipper, Lego's chief marketing officer, told *The Hollywood Reporter*. "And we were very much in doubt about what a Lego movie would look like, so we said no many times."

That didn't stop producers from plugging away at one particular project, with Phil Lord and Christopher Miller (who wrote and directed the animated film *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*) grinding out a script inspired by a story from Dan and Kevin Hageman. It was based on this winning—if somewhat convoluted—premise: What if a 10-year-old version of real-life blockbuster movie director Michael Bay kidnapped 10-year-old *Coraline* director Henry Selick and forced him to make a movie in the basement?

THE LEGO MOVIE

Lego finally committed, and the result was *The Lego Movie*, a 2014 mega hit that grossed $468 million worldwide while charming the little plastic minifigure pants off movie critics who found it both funny and hip.

While the final outcome was a success, making *The Lego Movie* had posed challenges not unlike those of a novice taking on the 9,090-piece Lego *Titanic* model.

The movie had to not only appeal to the nervous Danes back at Lego HQ, but also to both grown-ups and children, as well as generations of hardcore Lego fans. The look of the film needed to be both slick and tactile. The story had to be interesting and exciting. And the jokes had to land.

But Lord and Miller, who also directed the film, dove in anyway. "We have this flaw where we get excited by what seems like unsolvable problems," Miller told *The New York Times*. "We enjoyed the challenge of a puzzle."

One of the most important decisions was casting, and from the beginning the directors envisioned Chris Pratt as their hero, the construction worker Emmet Brickowski. The *Parks and Recreation* actor was rocketing toward superstardom thanks to *Guardians of the Galaxy*—which came out the same year as *The Lego Movie*—and the directors got a pleasant surprise when he said yes.

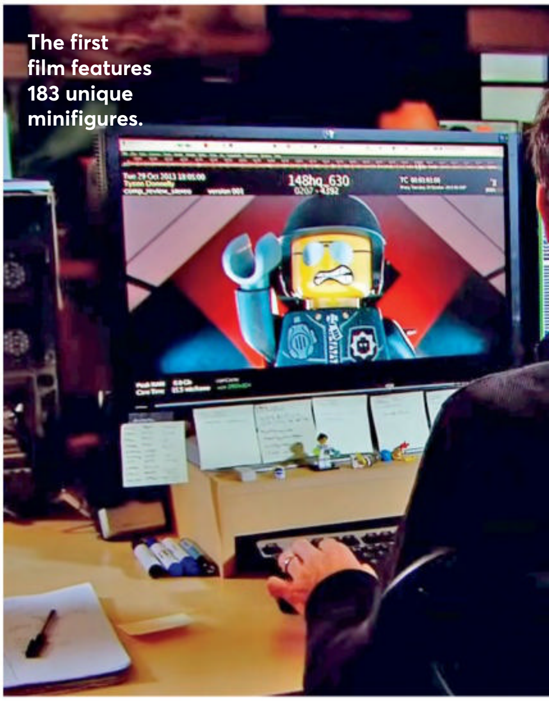
In addition to nailing the everyman voice role, Pratt proved invaluable on the promotion circuit, dishing out the charm as he did in an interview with *GQ* about his favorite things of 2014: "Movie of the year would be a tie between two of the greatest masterpieces in the history of cinema. One would be *The Lego Movie*, and the other would be Marvel's *Guardians of the Galaxy*."

The dream cast also included Elizabeth Banks in the twin roles of Wyldstyle and Lucy,

Fun Fact

The Lego Movie contains 3,863,484 unique bricks.

Elizabeth Banks with directors Christopher Miller (left) and Phil Lord.



The first film features 183 unique minifigures.

Alison Brie as Princess Unikitty, and Will Ferrell as Lord Business. Many of the characters were delicious riffs on pop culture figures, which made getting the legal rights a slog—*Harry Potter*'s Dumbledore doesn't come cheap—but the effort paid off. Will Arnett's gloomy Dark Knight out-Batmans every Batman ever put on screen, with hilarious results.

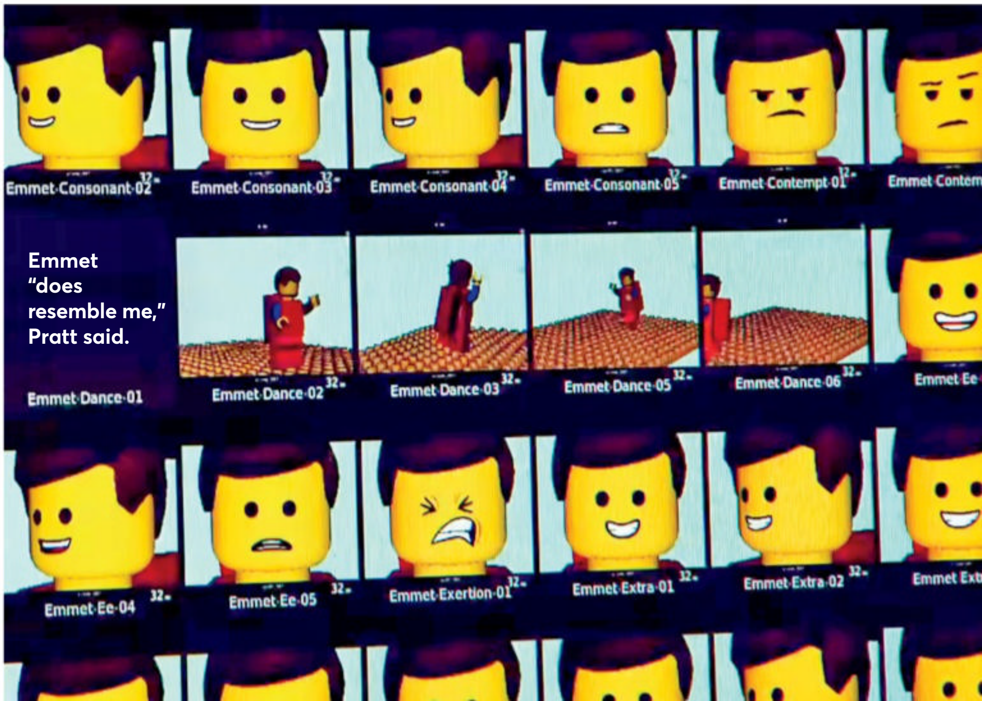
Balancing the schedules of these A-listers posed logistical headaches as directors wanted to get as many of them together in the same recording booth as possible. "We did Chris Pratt, Elizabeth Banks and Will Arnett together a couple times because they play off each other," Miller told Collider. "We ended up getting a lot of good stuff that way."

Next, the filmmakers wanted to nail the feel of the film. The actual Lego bricks provide pleasures that are both tactile and sublime, something the directors tried to tap into.

For realism, they couldn't do stop-motion with real bricks—that would have blown up the budget—so they used 3D computer animation that looked very much like the bricks. As animation supervisor Chris McKay told Animation World Network, "We wanted to make the film feel like the way you play, the way I remember playing. We wanted to make it feel as epic and ambitious and self-serious as a kid feels when they play with Lego. We took something you could claim is the most cynical cash grab in cinematic history, basically a 90-minute Lego commercial, and turned it into a celebration of creativity, fun and invention."

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE

When a movie makes nearly a half-billion dollars at the global box office, a sequel doesn't just seem inevitable—it seems fiscally required. And when the breakout star of said hit film is a comically insecure Batman voiced brilliantly by Will Arnett, it doesn't take a cinematic visionary to figure out who the next film should be built around.



Emmet "does resemble me," Pratt said.

Emmet-Consonant-02
Emmet-Consonant-03
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Emmet-Ee-04
Emmet-Ee-05
Emmet-Exertion-01
Emmet-Extra-01
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Chris Pratt said that like Emmet, he's "a very ordinary, regular guy."

But one thing nobody could have seen coming in *The Lego Batman Movie* is Arnett's Dark Knight having a moment of self-discovery while talking to Ellie Kemper's free-floating Lego brick in a scene that is both hilarious and very, very weird.

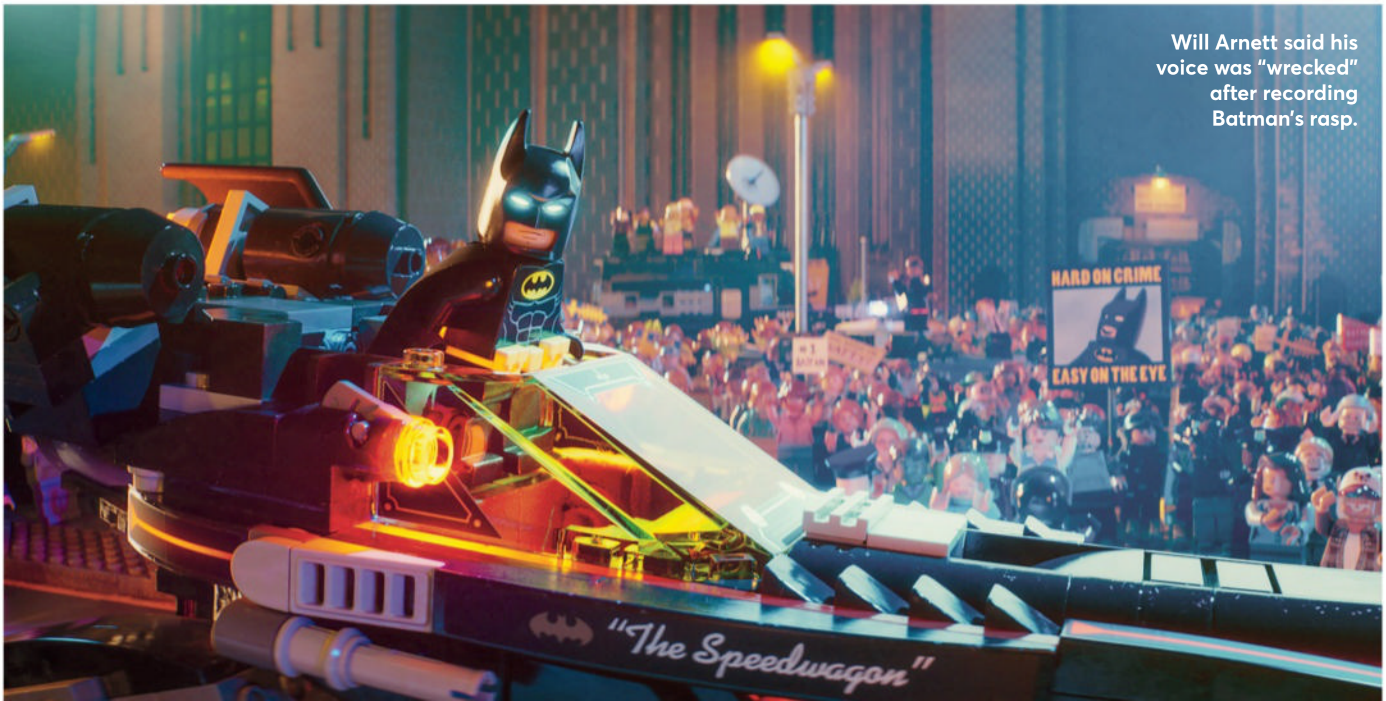
"I love that stuff," director Chris McKay told CBR.com "I love getting to play with the silliness and the absurdity of us making these movies in Lego. It's a fun gear to add to this thing and we always try to add extra jokes that are Lego-specific jokes."

Audiences and critics clearly got the joke. Released in 2017, the star-studded animated romp about the Caped Crusader's struggle to overcome his greatest fears so he can vanquish the Joker escaped the sequel curse to reap $312 million at the global box office and score an impressive 90% "fresh" rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

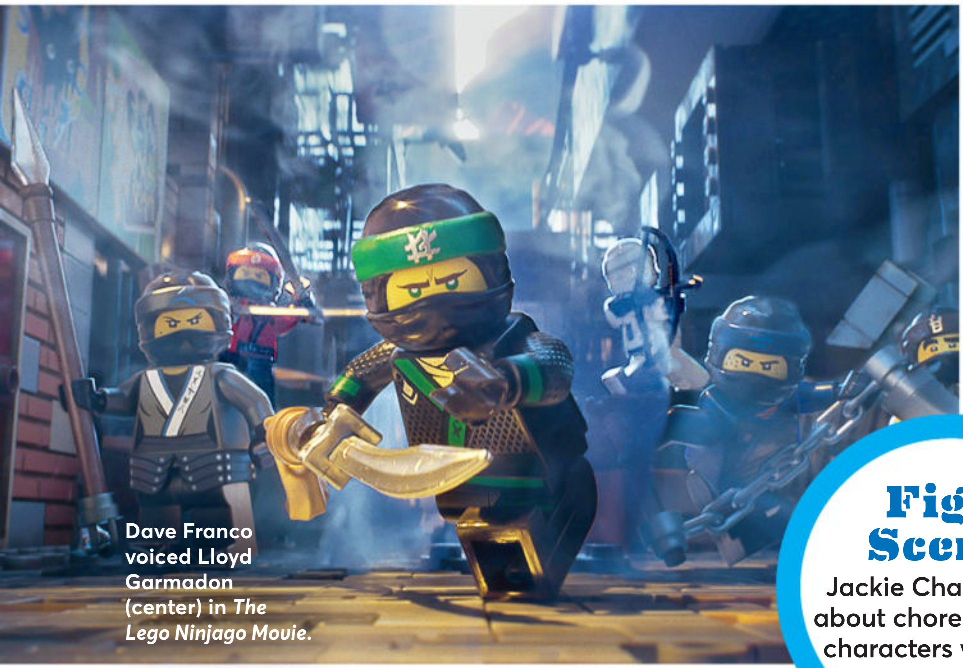
Once again, celebrities could not resist the pull of their favorite building brick, with *The Lego Batman Movie* attracting a stellar lead voice cast including Zach Galifianakis, Michael Cera, Rosario Dawson and

Making Money

Lego profits skyrocketed by 15% after the first film was released.



Will Arnett said his voice was "wrecked" after recording Batman's rasp.



Dave Franco voiced Lloyd Garmadon (center) in *The Lego Ninjago Movie.*

Ralph Fiennes, and supporting roles going to Billy Dee Williams, Conan O'Brien, Channing Tatum, Jonah Hill and Mariah Carey (as the mayor).

Batman also inundated viewers with one pop culture reference after another—everything from the great white shark in *Jaws* to a gag about a chilling *Twilight Zone* episode that proved to be nerd candy to fans, and no doubt another licensing headache for Lego's lawyers.

It's all wrapped up in a zany comedy style that McKay borrowed from *The Naked Gun* and *Airplane!* films, pitched to the studio brass as "Jerry Maguire as directed by Michael Mann," and later promoted in very appropriate Lego style with a life-size Lego Batmobile unveiled at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit.

THE LEGO NINJAGO MOVIE

Inspired by the Ninjago toy line and tied in with the animated TV series *Ninjago: Masters of Spinjitzu*, this 2017 project was as much a marketing campaign as a film. This third installment of the Lego movie franchise follows a teenage ninja's journey to uncover the truth about his evil father and stars the vocal talents of Dave Franco, Michael Pena and Olivia Munn—and a live-action appearance by Jackie Chan, who pulled double duty with a voice role and "choreographed" the animated fight scenes for the artists.

The Lego Ninjago Movie underwhelmed film critics and underperformed at the box office, grossing just $123 million worldwide, though it did deliver other economic benefits. Along with an affiliated video game, the film inspired more than 20 Lego sets and a collectible set of minifigures.

It was also a surreally emotional experience for Franco, who said he surprisingly found himself "crying uncontrollably" in the recording booth during his father-son scenes with Justin Theroux. "Then we finished the scene, and I kinda took a step back and evaluated the room and it was an interesting energy," he told CinemaBlend. "I realized I was playing a green Lego ninja piece and I needed to reel it in a bit."

Fight Scenes

Jackie Chan worried about choreographing characters who don't have knees.

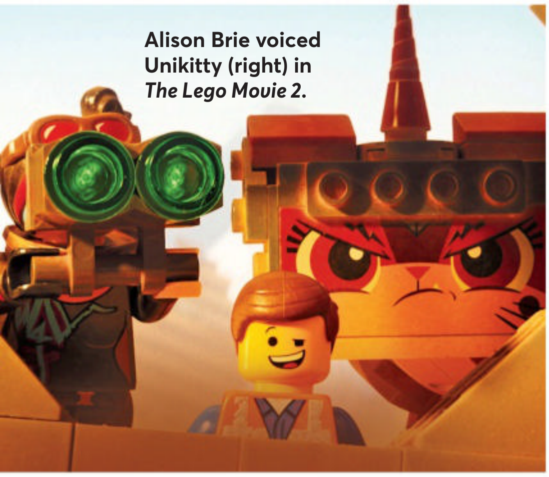
THE LEGO MOVIE 2: THE SECOND PART

Chris Pratt and Elizabeth Banks reunited with Will Arnett in this 2019 direct sequel to *The Lego Movie*, though the fourth film in the franchise. Set five years after the events of the first movie, *The Second Part* has the miniheroes scrambling to fend off a Lego Duplo invasion from outer space.

"I think you should only make a sequel if it's going to expand on what was originally there, and really remind everyone about the original—why we loved the original so much," director Mike Mitchell told Fandango. "It feels like that's what this one did."

While *The Lego Movie 2* garnered mostly good reviews, its $192 million worldwide box office fell short of expectations, particularly in light of the movie's $90 million budget and the additional $100 million spent on

There are more than 10,400 Lego minifigures.



Alison Brie voiced Unikitty (right) in *The Lego Movie 2*.

promotion. With two Lego films in a row underperforming, it raised the possibility that everything was not awesome behind the scenes.

THE FUTURE OF THE FRANCHISE

After *The Lego Movie 2* failed to light up the box office, Warner Bros. let their Lego film rights lapse and shelved plans to make the spin-offs *The Billion Brick Race* and *Lego Superfriends*.

Universal, however, snapped the rights up in a deal set to last until at least 2025 with Dan Lin remaining as producer. In the summer of 2022, Lin told The Hotseat podcast that *The Lego Movie 3* remains in the works. "We know we have to switch it up and take to a different art form that's still true to Lego," he said. "We should have some announcements soon.... I think we've reinvented it in a cool way."

CHEVROLET
BATMAN

Producer Dan Lin says the next film will be a reinvention of the franchise.

Tegan and Sara's video for the song has been viewed 74 million times on YouTube.

The Earworm Song

ALL ABOUT THAT TUNE, "EVERYTHING IS AWESOME."

When composer Shawn Patterson wrote *The Lego Movie* theme "Everything Is Awesome," he never thought the song would become such a smash with children. "I don't know if kids actually get the degree of sarcasm," Patterson, who was depressed and in the midst of a divorce when he wrote the song, told the *New York Post*.

This anthem to conformity and following orders contains such barbed lyrics as "We're the same / I'm like you, you're like me / We are working in harmony." An earworm of a song that mocks earworm songs, it's performed by the indie duo Tegan and Sara with help from Andy Samberg's comedy rap group, Lonely Island.

The "Awesome" song quickly caught on with children, who couldn't stop streaming it on YouTube. Then the adults took notice.

It became a mainstream hit on the dance charts and scored an Oscar nomination for Best Original Song in 2015, losing to the considerably more serious "Glory," from the civil rights drama *Selma*. (In 2017, "Awesome" went platinum, selling more than a million copies.)

But as *The Lego Movie*'s voice star Chris Pratt told Vulture, "Awesome" has its own kind of heft. "Twenty or 30 years from now, I think people will look back at 'Everything Is Awesome,' and it'll be more than just a cool pop song," he said. "It's really reflective of where we are right now, and that's what art is all about."

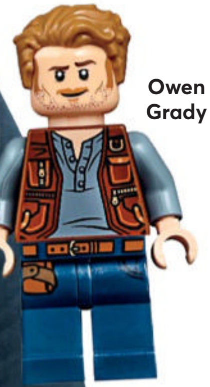
CELEBRITY MINIFIGURES

ACTORS—AND THEIR MOST FAMOUS ROLES—GET THE LEGO TREATMENT.

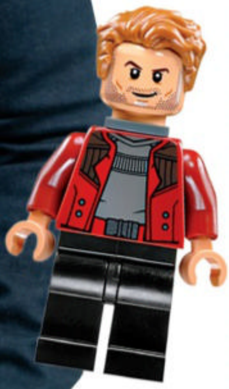
Chris Pratt

***JURASSIC WORLD*'S OWEN GRADY AND *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*'S STAR-LORD**

The action star has multiple minifigures—in addition to *The Lego Movie*'s Emmet Brickowski and the sequel's Radical Emmet Xtreme "Rex" Dangervest, Pratt is featured with a 6 o'clock shadow as Owen Grady from *Jurassic World*, and his *Guardians of the Galaxy* minifigure, Star-Lord, has cool space boots and more stubble. Does Lego make a shaver?



Owen Grady



Star-Lord

Pom Klementieff

MANTIS FROM *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL. 2*

"I have my own Lego!!!" the French star, who is set to reprise her role in the franchise's third film, gushed on social media back in 2017.

Paul Rudd

ANT-MAN

Before his Marvel movie came out in 2015, the *Anchorman* actor told Collider, "I want a Lego. I think the coolest thing of all is that I'm wondering if there's going to be one of me in Lego. That's the best thing. That's the only thing I want." His wish was granted, with not with just one minifigure, but a Microfigure and Giant-Man as well!

Bellatrix Lestrange

Helena Bonham Carter

***HARRY POTTER*'S BELLATRIX LESTRANGE**

Red Harrington

More like Lescary! Bonham Carter's character from *The Lone Ranger*, Red Harrington, was also released as a minifigure in 2013.

Nick Fury
Mace Windu

Samuel L. Jackson

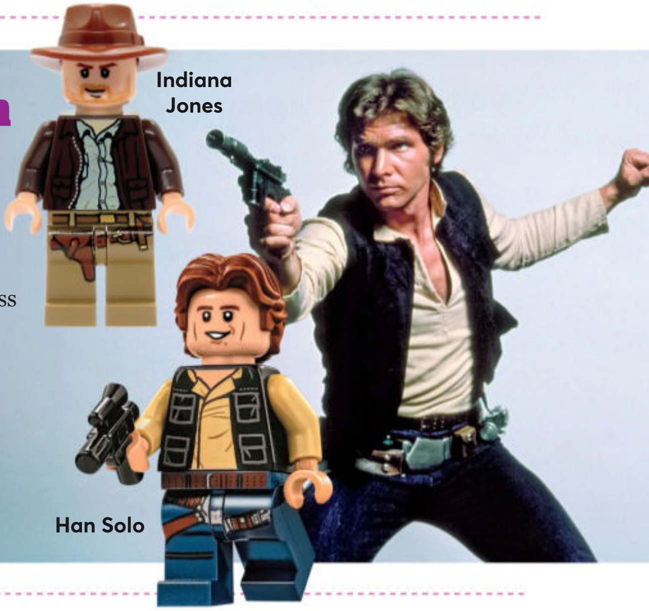
MARVEL'S NICK FURY AND *STAR WARS'* MACE WINDU

The actor (who also had a minifigure for his *Jurassic Park* character, Ray Arnold) goes from bad—in a good way—with an eye patch and goatee as the Marvel Cinematic Universe's antihero to cool and determined with a (slightly oversized) lightsaber as *Star Wars'* Jedi Master Windu.

Harrison Ford

INDIANA JONES AND *STAR WARS'* HAN SOLO

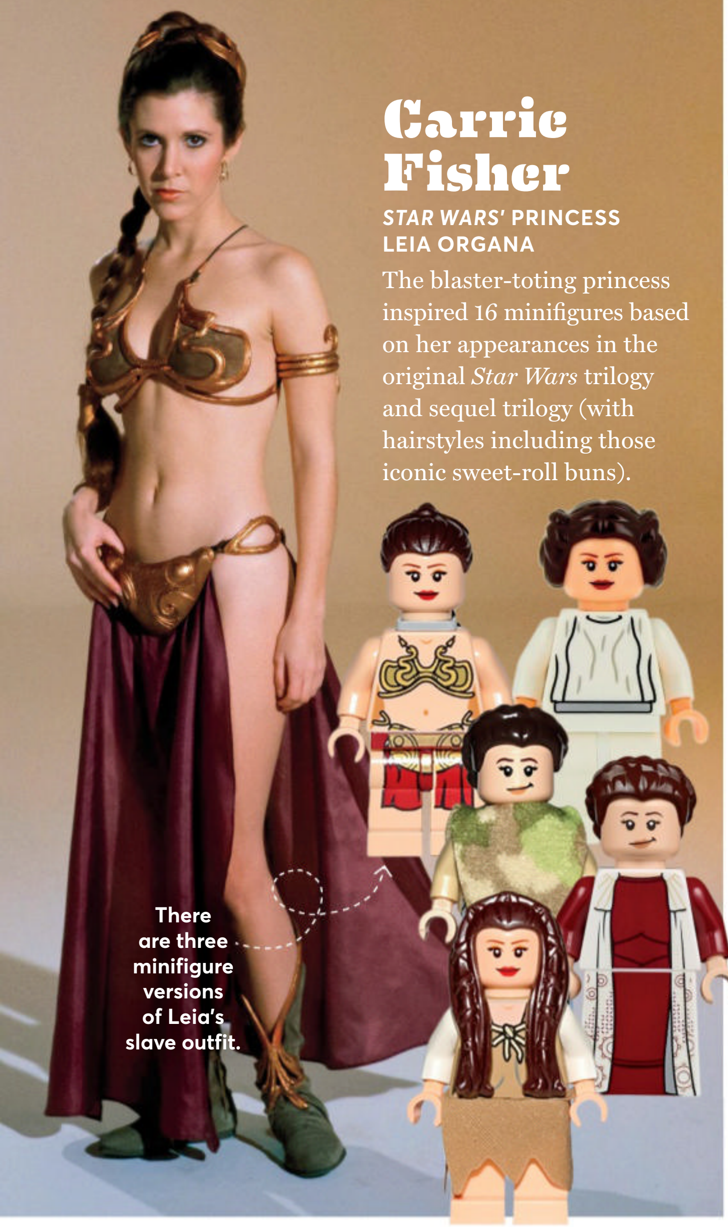
The actor gets just the right amount of cockiness as Han Solo from *Star Wars* and a mighty whip as archaeologist Dr. Jones. There are 39 different minifigure versions of his two iconic characters.



Chris Hemsworth

THOR

The Aussie actor has another minifigure made of one of his movie characters—*Ghostbusters'* Kevin Beckman—but his hammer-wielding god with flowing blond locks is the one fans love. "How in the hell is it possible that Chris Hemsworth is still super hot in Lego form?!" EOnline marveled.



There are three minifigure versions of Leia's slave outfit.

Carrie Fisher

STAR WARS' PRINCESS LEIA ORGANA

The blaster-toting princess inspired 16 minifigures based on her appearances in the original *Star Wars* trilogy and sequel trilogy (with hairstyles including those iconic sweet-roll buns).

Will Turner
Legolas

Orlando Bloom

***LORD OF THE RINGS'* LEGOLAS AND *PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN*'S WILL TURNER**

The self-confessed Lego fan, who said he had "hours of fun" building Technic and Creator Expert cars with his son during the COVID lockdown, has a Lego room in the house he shares with fiancée Katy Perry. "Just figured out the word Lego is in Legolas coincidence? I think not," he tweeted in 2020.

Jason Momoa

AQUAMAN

"So awesome!" the star tweeted about the very, very, very small version of his DC Comics' superhero.

Daniel Radcliffe

HARRY POTTER

The real-life Lego fan's wizard character appears in 38 of the 50 Harry Potter-themed sets. The boy who lived is also a microfigure, nanofigure and BrickHeadz character (with his owl, Hedwig) and is featured as a baby with mom Lily Potter in the Wizarding World Series 2 set that was released in 2020.

Cate Blanchett

FRANCHISE QUEEN

The Oscar winner has played three characters that have been turned into minifigures: Galadriel from *The Hobbit,* Hela from *Thor: Ragnarok* and Irina Spalko from *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.*

Galadriel
Hela
Irina
Spalko

Zoe Saldana

***AVATAR*'S NEYTIRI AND *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*'S GAMORA**

The actress didn't get the collectible minifigure treatment when the first *Avatar* film came out in 2009, but her character was featured in the 2020 Lego release Avatar: The Illuminated World of Pandora. Two Neytiri figures were also released in October 2022 for sets tied to the sequel, *Avatar: The Way of Water*.

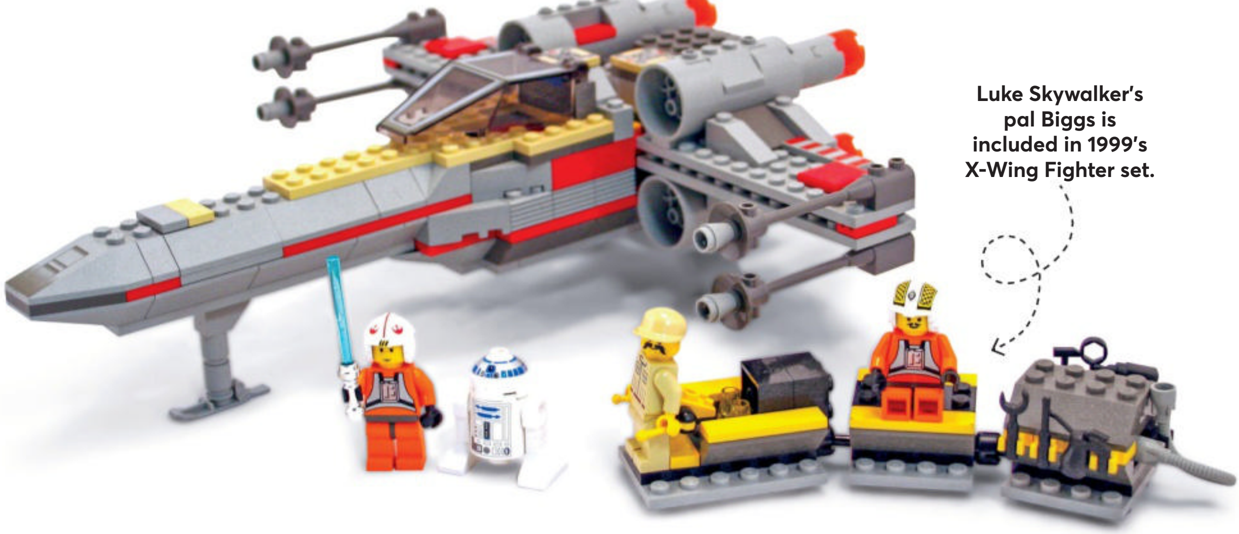
Neytiri
Gamora

MVP! Warwick Davis

MULTIPLE CHARACTERS IN *STAR WARS* AND *HARRY POTTER*

The actor, who made his acting debut as an Ewok named Wicket W. Warrick in *Return of the Jedi*, has been immortalized five times: as Wicket, then as Wald, one of Anakin Skywalker's playmates, as well as vigilante Weazel in *Episode I—The Phantom Menace*, and as *Harry Potter*'s Professor Filius Flitwick and the goblin Griphook.

Wicket
Wald
Griphook
Weazel
Professor
Filius Flitwick



Luke Skywalker's pal Biggs is included in 1999's X-Wing Fighter set.

A PARTNERSHIP MADE IN THE HEAVENS

AFTER INITIALLY REJECTING *STAR WARS*, LEGO ENJOYS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL FRANCHISE DEALS IN TOY HISTORY.

Back in March 1999, Lego debuted the X-Wing Fighter set, a 266-piece model of the *Star Wars* spaceship selling for $30. Timed to the release of the blockbuster *The Phantom Menace*, the X-Wing sets rocketed off the shelves, launching one of the most successful partnerships in the history of Hollywood and toy manufacturing.

Over the next 23 years, Lego has released more than 850 *Star Wars* sets, along with video games, short films, TV series, and merchandise ranging from key rings to T-shirts.

Two of the sets most cited by Lego fans as the best ever are both from the *Star Wars* line: the Millennium Falcon from 2011 and the Death Star from 2016. Luke Skywalker is believed to have the most Lego minifigures of any character (see sidebar, right).

And yet, back in 1997, it nearly didn't happen. According to the authoritative Lego history *Brick by Brick*, executives at the Danish headquarters repeatedly rejected a deal with *Star Wars* producer LucasFilm two years ahead of the release of *The Phantom Menace*. One VP was quoted as saying, "Over my dead body will Lego ever introduce *Star Wars*."

The partnership flew in the face of Lego's longstanding fierce independence—it didn't just turn down *Star Wars*, but all licensing deals, even as competitors were scooping them up—but also spoke to the company's aversion to products linked to violence and war. To this day, Lego does not produce any real-life battleship or fighter pilot

Baby Yoda has adjustable ears.

LEGO STAR WARS
BOBA FETT

Sadly, Boba Fett's Lego helmet is not life-size.

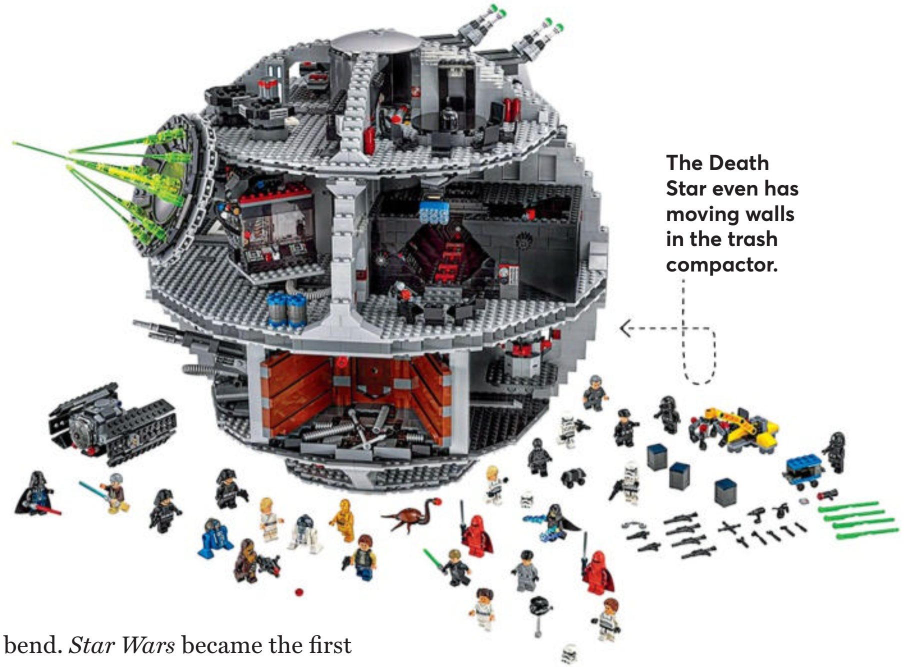
sets. "The very name, *Star Wars*, was anathema to the Lego concept," the company's chief of operations in the Americas, Peter Eio, told the *Brick by Brick* authors, who related how his argument that *Star Wars* was more about the clash between good and evil than real blood-and-death fell largely on deaf ears in Denmark.

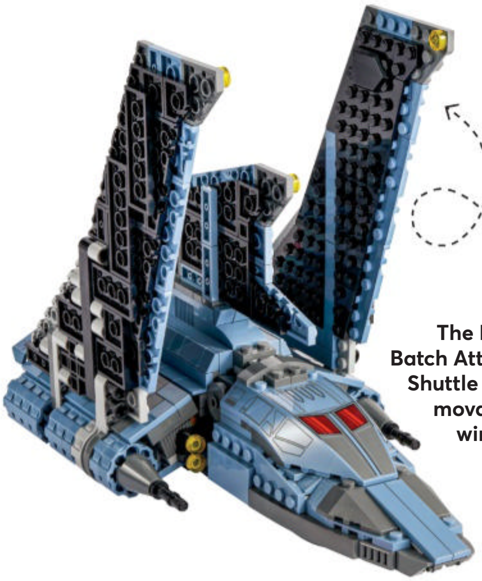
Only when a Lego-sponsored survey of parents in the United States and Germany came back with an overwhelmingly positive response to *Star Wars* did the Danes finally bend. *Star Wars* became the first intellectual property licensed by Lego in company history. And not a moment too soon.

After a series of business misfires, the early 2000s saw the once-mighty Lego teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. It was largely thanks to *Star Wars*—whose early sets accounted for a big chunk of Lego sales—that the company got the fiscal breathing room it needed to regroup and find a way to sell analog toys in a digital age.

The same year that Lego signed with *Star Wars*, it also allied with *Harry Potter*. There would follow a long string of partnerships: Batman, *Jurassic World*, Super Mario, *Indiana Jones*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, the slate of Marvel superheroes, *Lord of the Rings*, Spider-Man, Monkie Kid, *Stranger Things*, and even the friends from *Friends*.

But the most successful marriage of all has been the one with *Star Wars*. Originally only licensed through 2008, the deal was extended until 2011, then again until 2016, and again until 2022. The current license runs through 2032, guaranteeing that The Force will be with Lego for a long time to come.


The Death Star even has moving walls in the trash compactor.


The Bad Batch Attack Shuttle has movable wings.

Lego Can't Get Enough Luke Skywalker

THE JEDI MASTER WAS THE FIRST EVER LICENSED LEGO MINIFIGURE.

According to BrickPedia.com, there are 29 different Luke Skywalker minifigures in the Lego universe, the most of any of the tiny people. The *Star Wars* hero made his debut in 1999 with an impressive mop of hair. Over the years, little Luke underwent multiple makeovers with all sorts of costume changes, hairstyles, and nifty lightsaber and helmet accessories. In one version, he even has a black hand for the one that got sliced off.

In 2017, Mark Hamill interviewed Lego Luke and asked him, "Why are you so darn popular, Lego Luke? You're more popular than the real Luke!" The minifigure's response: "Ha ha, that's a good one."

Luke even cameos in the Indiana Jones Lego video game.

MR. LEGO

HOW *ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT* STAR WILL ARNETT BECAME LEGO'S GO-TO GUY.

Aside from the fame, money and TV show hosting gig, playing Lego's Batman offers other benefits for Will Arnett. For instance, just for kicks, he slips into the deep voice when ordering Chinese food. Or he can get really deep to make sure his young sons pay attention to him when they're fighting.

But most of all, he says, he can enjoy a side of the character that George Clooney, Christian Bale, Ben Affleck, Val Kilmer, Michael Keaton, Robert Pattinson, and even Adam West never could experience. "I get to play the fun Batman," he told *ET Canada*. "I get to just show up and goof around."

Actually, according to those who work with him, Arnett brings considerably more than that to his work. His co-star Michael Cera from *The Lego Batman Movie* is in awe of the *Arrested Development* alum's vocal talents, describing the Batman voice as "sandpaper on Velcro," while *Lego Batman Movie* director Chris McKay calls Arnett deceptively gifted.

"He's, like, a real actor," he told the *Los Angeles Times*. "And I guess what I'm trying to say when I say that is that he's not just a comic presence. I think there's a live-action movie role that is going to be able to use his charm, his charisma, his roguishness. His potential still has yet to be tapped."

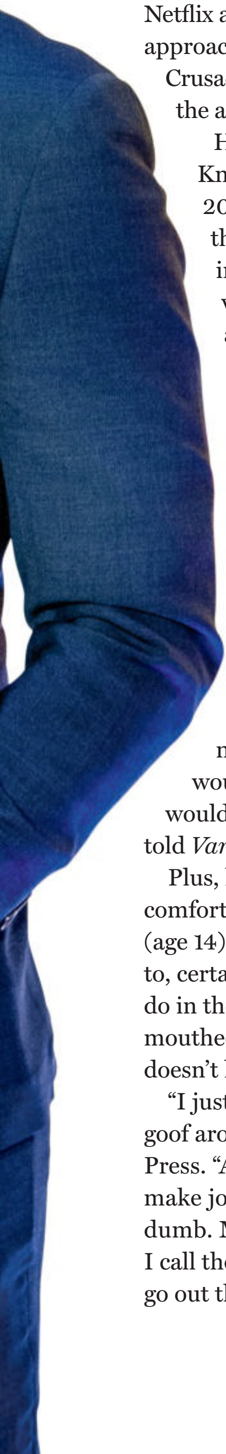
Until then, Arnett will content himself with being one of the busiest actors in Hollywood, with a slate of voice and on-screen gigs to go with hosting the building competition show *Lego Masters* on Fox (see page 64), securing his position as the official face of the Lego empire, a role he finds as enjoyable as it is unlikely. "If you told me when I was a kid building with Legos, which I did a lot, that later in my adult life, Lego was going to play such a huge part of my life, I would have thought, 'Well, that's impossible,'" he told *Parade*. "And the last almost 10 years, Lego has been such a huge part of my life."

The Ontario-born Arnett got his show business start behind the microphone, lending his gravelly baritone to network promos, movie trailers and TV commercials, which he still does today. That's Arnett's voice on those GMC truck commercials saying, "It's not more than you need, just more than you're used to."

He got to show his face in a string of pilots for shows that either didn't get picked up or were quickly canceled, failures that contributed to his lifelong battle with alcoholism, a subject he has always been candid about. Arnett was so soured on pilots that he almost didn't audition for a quirky comedy called *Arrested Development*. His breakout role as George Oscar "Gob" Bluth won him audience acclaim and an Emmy nomination and set his career on the fast track.

Hard Pass

He doesn't want to portray Batman because the suit is "a pain in the neck."



In the ice-skating competition spoof *Blades of Glory*, Arnett paired with then-wife Amy Poehler as a creepy brother-sister skating act with incestuous overtones. The 2007 film went to the top of the box office and propelled Arnett to a string of movie and TV roles, including several guest-starring spots with Poehler on *Parks and Recreation*.

In between, Arnett continued his voiceover work. He signed on for the critically acclaimed cartoon-for-grown-ups *BoJack Horseman* on Netflix at the same time that producers approached him to play a Caped Crusader with self-esteem issues in the animated *The Lego Movie*.

His clever take on the Dark Knight was such a hit in the 2014 film that producers built the 2017 sequel around him in *The Lego Batman Movie*, which also scored with critics and audiences, and brought him back a third time in 2019's *The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part*. The three movies cemented a mutual admiration society between Arnett and Lego, to the point that he went outside his comfort zone and agreed to host *Lego Masters* in 2020.

"If it weren't for the fact that it's Lego, and something that I've been involved with now for 10 years, it probably wouldn't be something that I would be inclined to do," the actor told *Variety*.

Plus, he added, it's a show he's comfortable bringing his sons Archie (age 14), Abel (12) and Alexander (2) to, certainly not something he could do in the recording booth of the foul-mouthed *BoJack Horseman*, which he doesn't let his kids watch.

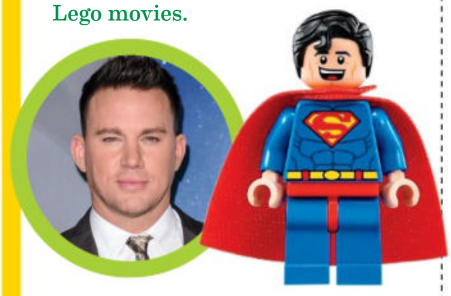
"I just got to be myself and kind of goof around," he told the Associated Press. "And I make mistakes and I make jokes and I say stuff that is dumb. My kids call them 'dad jokes,' I call them 'bad jokes,' and I just try to go out there and have fun."

Other Lego A-Listers

THE FACES BEHIND THE VOICES.

CHANNING TATUM

The *Magic Mike* hunk lends his voice to Superman in three Lego movies.



JACKIE CHAN

He also appears on-screen in *The Lego Ninjago Movie*, but Chan wasn't a major Lego fan because the bricks weren't available in China when he was growing up.

ROSARIO DAWSON

The *Ahsoka* star goes behind the microphone as Batgirl in *The Lego Batman Movie*.

SEATTLE
SEAHAWKS

WILL FERRELL

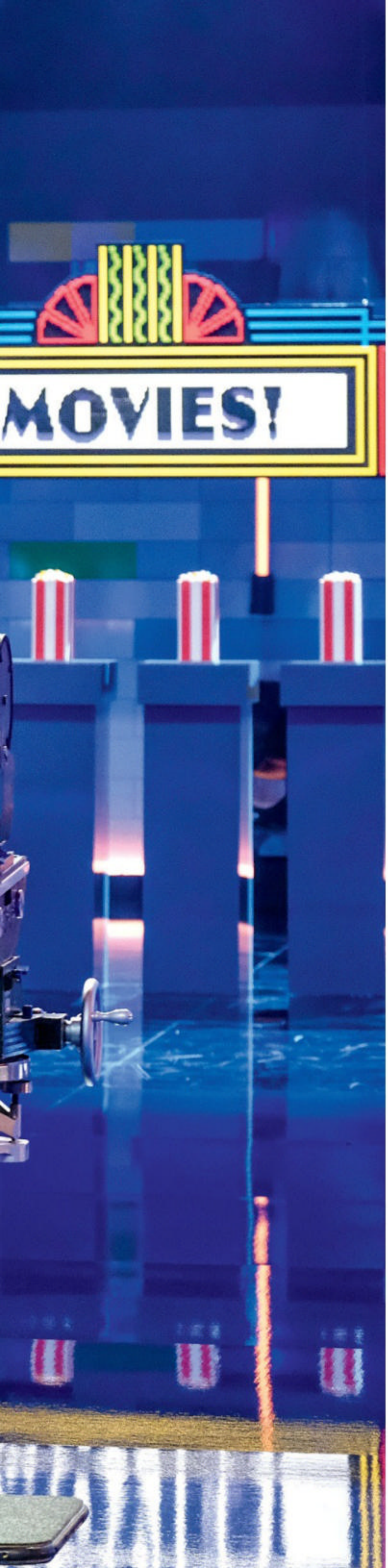
The funnyman gets to play the heavy, Lord Business, in the Lego films.

THE LEGO MOVIE

ELIZABETH BANKS

As Batman's former girlfriend, *The Hunger Games* star really gets around in the Lego films, also hanging out with *Star Wars'* Han Solo, Chewbacca and C-3PO.

Lego Masters host Will Arnett (center) with judges Jamie Berard and Amy Corbett.



THE LITTLE SHOW THAT BECAME A BIG HIT

WE HAVE BRAD PITT TO THANK FOR BRINGING *LEGO MASTERS* TO THE U.S.

When a Lego-building competition show premiered in Britain in 2017, audiences couldn't get enough of watching teams turn out incredible creations with the little bricks. After *Lego Masters* debuted as the highest-rated series on the U.K.'s Channel 4, the show soon became one of the country's leading exports.

An Australian version also shot to No. 1 in key demographics, so it was only a matter of time—a very short amount of time—before the series arrived in the United States, coproduced by Brad Pitt, through his Plan B Entertainment company, for the Fox network.

The casting call went out in 2019 at San Diego Comic-Con for "the most creative, passionate, and innovative Lego builder teams of two," and within weeks the cameras were rolling at Los Angeles' Chandler Valley Center Studios, familiar to millions as the exterior of the Dunder Mifflin building on another British import show, *The Office*.

From the beginning, producers of the American version of *Lego Masters* sought to capture the spirit of creativity and the vibe of the original to create a gentler competition that was more *The Great British Baking Show* than *The Hunger Games*.

As Fox executive Rob Wade explained, "*Lego Masters* has everything you want in a reality competition: an incredibly quirky and unique twist on a brand revered by billions of people, exciting team-based battles driven by creativity and a premise that's ultra-family friendly."

For the show's host, the producers tapped Will Arnett, who as Batman

The Boss
Brad Pitt voiced a Lego version of himself in Season 3.

Brickmaster Corbett is a senior design manager for Lego.

in the Lego animated films brings a ready-made link to the toy line with his goofy humor and supportive everything-is-awesome personality.

"He's actually quite good at making sure that even in this stressful environment with a giant clock ticking over your head and you've got to make up these amazing models in a relatively short period of time, he just comes in there as almost like a cheerleader, the coach, to tell them, 'That's awesome, you're going to do great,' but also give them a little bit of fun on the side," Amy Corbett, one of the show's judges, explained.

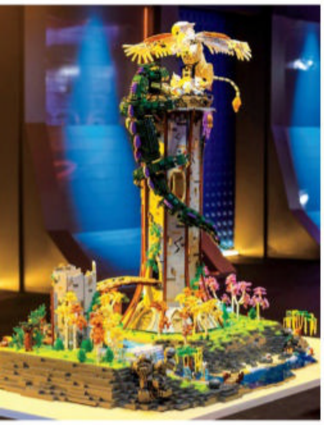
The two-person teams of "builders" draw from the show's astonishing collection of 3 million Lego pieces to make creations later judged by Corbett and

A Big Hit

A Marvel-themed episode that aired on Thanksgiving 2022 drew an impressive 2.94 million viewers.

Winning Creations Over the Seasons

RECALLING SOME OF OUR FAVORITE BUILDS.

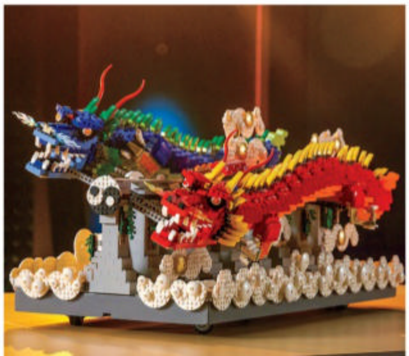


TREASURE OF THE GRIFFIN

Season 1 champions, Tyler and Amy Clites, constructed a moving griffin protecting its nest from a predatory lizard atop a tower in what Amy called a metaphor for parental love and protection.

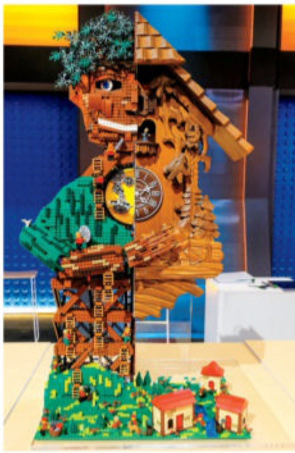
SOARING DRAGON

Season 2 got off to a dazzling start with Zack and Wayne Macasaet's pair of colorful Chinese dragons gliding down the street as a parade float.



A CLOCKWORK MAN

The debut season featured one of the most astonishing builds. Instructed to use real-life objects with the Lego, Richard Board and Flynn De Marco won their round with an amazing robot guarding a ticking cuckoo clock as mini townspeople go about their lives down below.



Jamie Berard, who have day jobs as creative minds at Lego. The teams do work under a clock, but it's a very slow one, five to 12 hours, and even longer—the finale was 24 hours of work—reflecting the real-life pace of working with Legos. The judges stroll between competing teams offering advice while trying not to make them too nervous. The champion team at season's end wins $100,000.

Debuting in February 2020, the show became a COVID-era hit, mirroring the boost in Lego sales during lockdown. It also featured a heartwarming side story: The eventual winners, Tyler and Amy Clites, a husband-and-wife team, found out during the competition that they were expecting a baby, news that was announced on the show.

Seasons 2 and 3 followed, with a fourth one ordered, and a second celebrity special is set for late 2023.

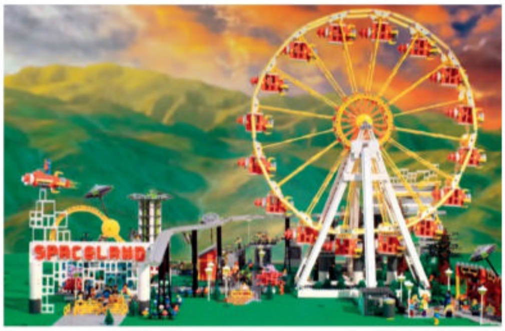
Twins Caleb and Jacob Schilling were fan favorites on Season 2.

Lego Masters, according to Arnett, benefits most of all from generations of people's love for Lego. "Lego is such a big part of their lives," he told *Variety*. "This is something that they've been doing forever. There's an emotional connection there for them with Lego that they've carried through their whole lives. What you find is that it really does cross a variety of people."

And, yes, the *Arrested Development* alum concludes: "It's awesome."

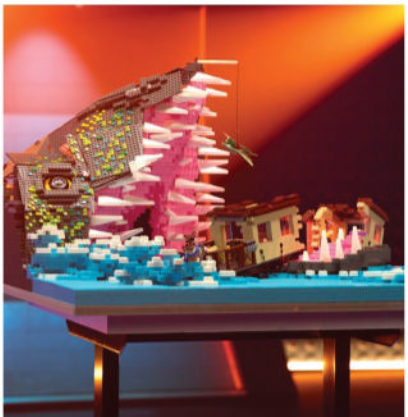
SPACELAND

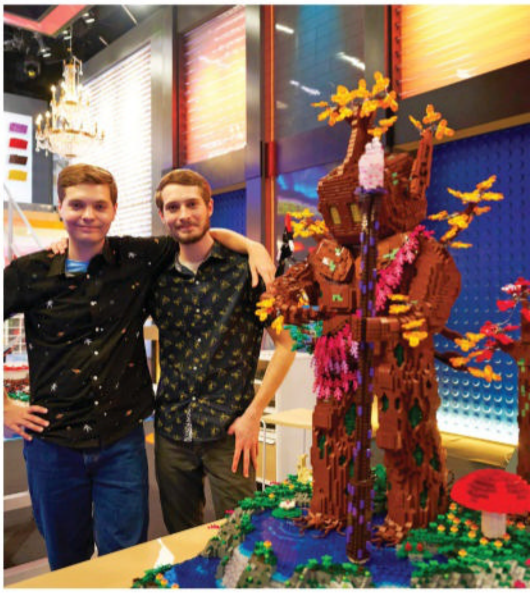
A spinning motorized Ferris wheel towered over other attractions in a Dream Park Theme Park build by Christian Cowgill and Aaron Newman in the first week of Season 1.



MOSASAURUS MADNESS

A giant Mosasaurus rose from the sea in Emily Mohajeri Norris and her son Liam's standout build in Season 3's dinosaur-themed episode, with *Jurassic World*'s Chris Pratt as a celebrity guest.





WARDEN OF THE WOODS

In what became the battle of three sets of brothers, Mark and Steven Erickson won a marathon 24-hour final build in the Season 2 finale in September 2021, with the day-and-night theme featuring a mystical scene of a creature with glowing eyes rescuing lost minifigures.

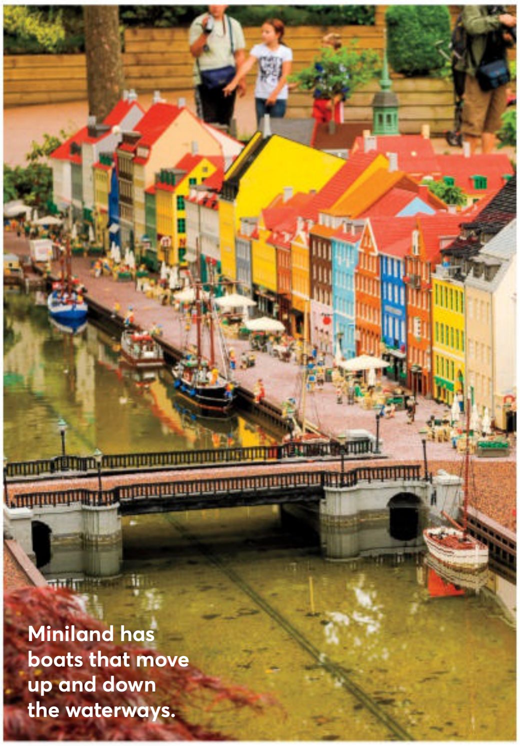
FUN FOR EVERYONE

LEGO MOVES INTO A GLOBAL CHAIN OF THEME PARKS WHILE VIDEO GAMES, CONVENTIONS AND COLLECTIBLES EXPAND THE EXPERIENCE.

LEGOLANDS AROUND THE WORLD

A BUSINESS PROMOTION EVENTUALLY GROWS INTO A GLOBAL AMUSEMENT PARK EMPIRE.

The resort's Castle Hotel opened in 2019.



Miniland has boats that move up and down the waterways.

Denmark

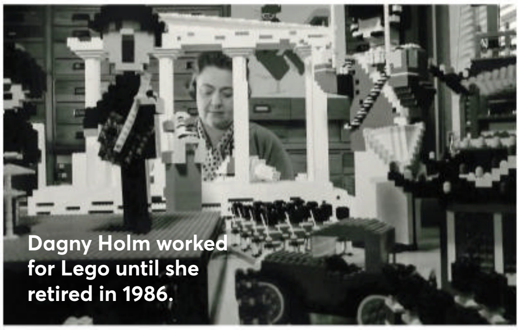
LEGOLAND BILLUND RESORT

By the 1960s, as Lego entered its second decade as a plastic toymaker, the factory in Billund, Denmark, drew tens of thousands of visitors a year eager to see how the company created its colorful little bricks.

Tapping into this fascination—and to further promote the brand—Lego's chief Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, who had taken over the company from his late father, envisioned an attraction like Madurodam, the popular Netherlands park featuring miniature models of Dutch landmarks.

In the summer of 1968, Christiansen opened the first Legoland, a 14-acre park next to the factory that was an immediate success, drawing 625,000 visitors in its first season. The big attraction was Miniland, a world of Lego-built miniatures created by Christiansen's cousin, sculptor Dagny Holm, who became Lego's chief model designer.

Expanded over the years to 45 acres with nine themed areas such as Duplo Land, Pirate Land and Imagination Town, the original Legoland inspired a string of the company's parks around the world. It still ranks as one of Denmark's biggest attractions, with tens of millions of visitors each year.



Dagny Holm worked for Lego until she retired in 1986.

The Dutch village has spinning windmills.

The Trooping the Colour for 2022's Platinum Jubilee took 280 hours to create.

The Mythica attraction is an immersive experience.

Miniroyals wore hats created by the late Queen Elizabeth II's milliner in 2014.

England

LEGOLAND WINDSOR RESORT

Searching for a second Legoland in the late 1980s, the company considered 1,000 locations around the world. Executives settled on Windsor, 25 miles west of London, scooping up the bankrupt and shuttered Windsor Safari Park. They sent the animals off to other parks, and transformed the site into a world of bricks.

The centerpiece of the attraction was, naturally, a scale replica of the iconic Big Ben clock tower, along with other famous U.K. sights such as Buckingham Palace. Opened in 1996, Legoland Windsor drew big crowds—1.4 million guests that first year—but like the original park in Billund, it got mired in the larger financial problems afflicting Lego in the early 2000s.

The Danish and English Legolands were sold, and these and other affiliated parks are now run by the British theme park company Merlin Entertainments, though Lego still holds a financial stake.

The port of Hamburg is nestled on a large pond.

Neuschwanstein Castle is almost 10 feet tall.

Germany

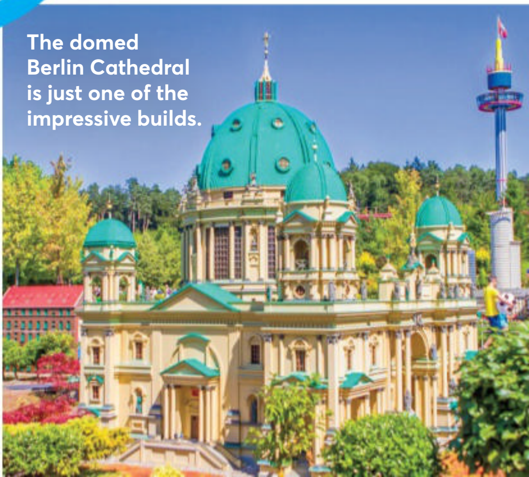
LEGOLAND DEUTSCHLAND RESORT

With a Miniland of German cities and farms, the park that opened in May 2002 in the Bavarian town of Günzburg, halfway between Munich and Stuttgart, puts a Teutonic twist on the Legoland experience.

The park boasts a recreation of the 19th-century Neuschwanstein Castle, also known as the Disney castle because it inspired a vacationing Walt Disney when he created Sleeping Beauty's and Cinderella's castles. Legoland's version took six model designers six months to create, with more than 300,000 Lego bricks.

Brick Mania!

Designers used 25 million bricks to create the cities at the German park.


The domed Berlin Cathedral is just one of the impressive builds.

United States

LEGOLAND CALIFORNIA

The first of the three American Legolands, the park in the Southern California community of Carlsbad, 35 miles north of San Diego, opened its doors in 1999, taking on fierce competition in the amusement park business to the north in the form of Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm and Universal Studios. With eight themed areas at the beginning, Legoland California Resort held its own, bringing in millions of visitors a year until COVID shut down the park from 2020 to 2021.

Now reopened, Legoland California Resort is welcoming back visitors to its 60 rides, shows and attractions and 22,000 Lego models made from more than 57 million bricks.

The Splash Battle ride features water cannons.

Sea Life Aquarium puts Lego creations in an underwater world with real-life sharks, stingrays, jellyfish and sea turtles.

SEA LIFE
AQUARIUM

The hotel offers Pirate, Kingdom and Adventure-themed rooms.

The Ninjago Ride "rivals the most innovative attractions at Disney and Universal," TripSavvy wrote.

WU'S WAREHOUSE
NINJAGO

LEGOLAND FLORIDA

In another market teeming with amusement park options, Lego opened Legoland Florida Resort, 50 miles south of the Mouse House, on the old Cypress Gardens park grounds in 2011. Lego kept the botanical gardens—opened in 1936—and a giant banyan tree, rebranded the waterpark and added Lego-themed attractions and rides. Highlights include a recreation of *The Lego Movie*'s Bricksburg, where you'll find Emmet's apartment and performers in life-size minifigure costumes.

Fight Duplo aliens on this water ride.

LEGOLAND NEW YORK RESORT

The third American Legoland opened in 2021 in the historic 18th-century town of Goshen, N.Y., 65 miles north of Manhattan. It ranks as the largest Legoland in the world, which means a lot of walking for the little ones but a wealth of everything Lego-themed New York, including a Lego Statue of Liberty and a (real water) New York Harbor.

The resort also offers this unique event: Adult Night, in which grown-ups can visit on a kids-free evening...with booze.

Hotel Hijinks

The resort's hotel has large talking models in Brick's Family Restaurant.

The Dragon is "hands-down the best ride," one website declared.

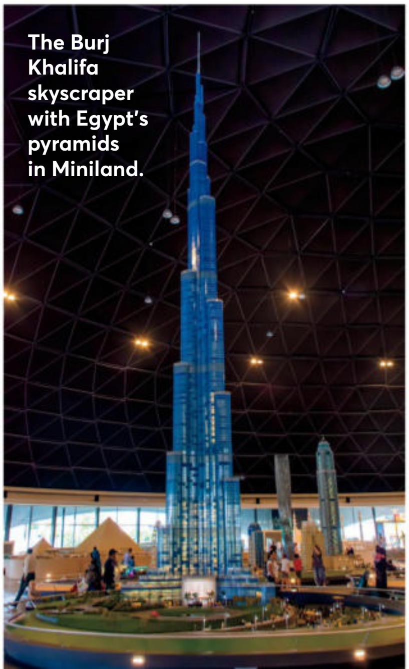
NYC's St. Patrick's Cathedral in Miniland.

Lady Liberty stands near the Coast Guard Academy ride.

Dubai

LEGOLAND DUBAI RESORT

The first Legoland in the Middle East, Legoland Dubai Resort arrived in 2016 with the usual rides and attractions, along with something tailor-made for the desert environment. The Miniland not only features models of such United Arab Emirate landmarks as the Burj Khalifa skyscraper—the world's tallest building—but is the only Miniland in the Lego empire that is fully air-conditioned.



The Burj Khalifa skyscraper with Egypt's pyramids in Miniland.

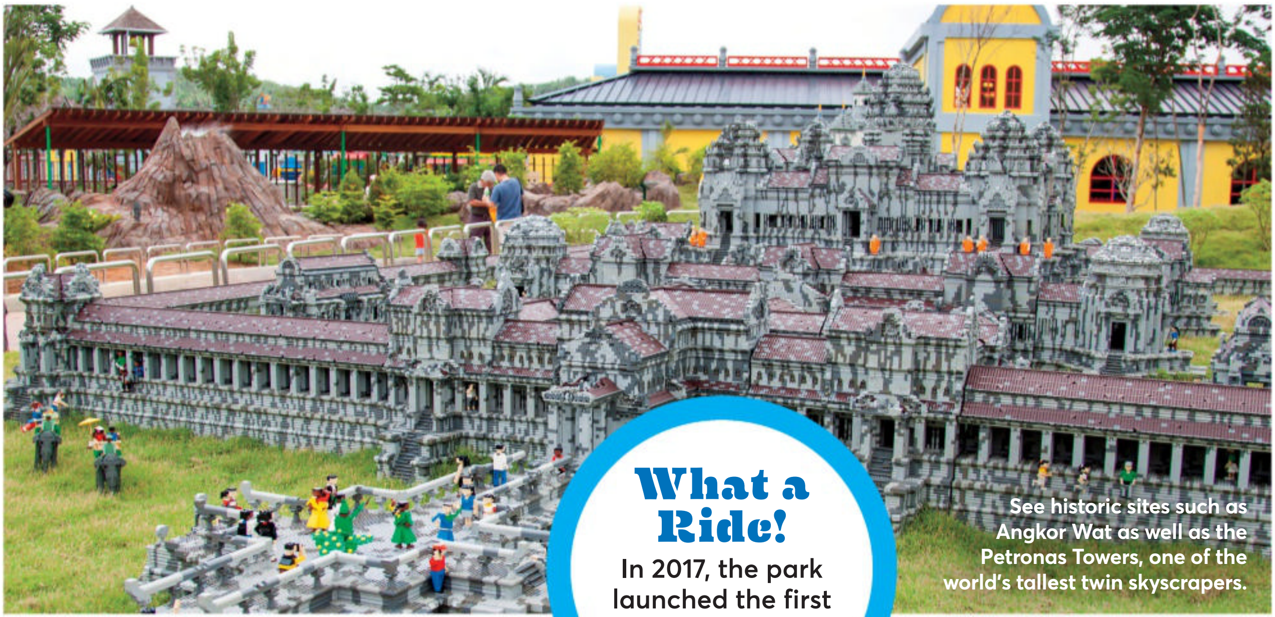
The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Malaysia

LEGOLAND MALAYSIA RESORT

The first Legoland in Asia opened as part of Malaysia's effort to spur development and raise the standard of people's living conditions. "By God's grace," the prime minister said at the 2012 opening, "we have reached another level through the efforts of all those involved." Miniland features models of such landmarks as Angkor Wat in Cambodia, The Forbidden City in China, and the Taj Mahal in India.

Miniland took three years to complete.


See historic sites such as Angkor Wat as well as the Petronas Towers, one of the world's tallest twin skyscrapers.

What a Ride!

In 2017, the park launched the first virtual reality roller coaster.

LEGOLAND
HOTEL
WELCOM
The hotel's smallest room fits a family of five.

South Korea

LEGOLAND KOREA RESORT

Built on an island, Legoland Korea Resort welcomed guests in May 2022 with high expectations and rumblings of controversy over financial troubles during construction and high ticket prices that have contributed to below-expected attendance.

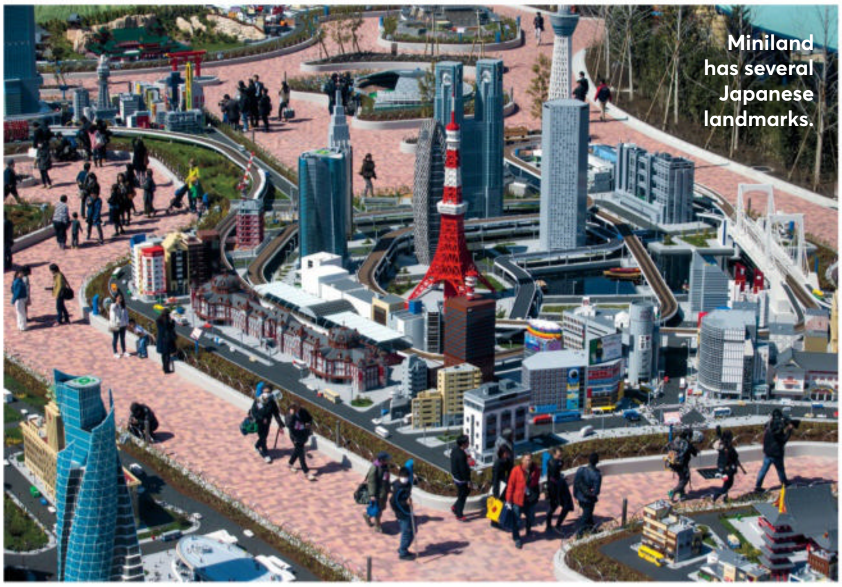
It's the second largest Legoland in the world, after New York, and boasts more than 40 rides, shows and attractions. There is also a hotel with Lego-themed rooms.

Japan

LEGOLAND JAPAN RESORT

A special commuter train brings visitors to the 23-acre Legoland Japan Resort, opened in 2017 in Nagoya, the fourth-largest city in the country. The park has seven themed zones—Bricktopia, Adventure, Knight's Kingdom, Pirate Shores, Miniland, Lego City and Ninjago World—and there are more than 10,000 models, made of about 17 million Lego bricks. The resort also features a Lego Factory Tour, a Robotic Play Centre and a Creative Workshop for rainy days.

The Robotic Play Centre is for kids ages 5 to 10.


Miniland has several Japanese landmarks.

Watch for surprises on the Factory Tour.

Brussels got a Lego Discovery Center in 2022.

Future Legolands

Lego's next amusement park frontier lies in China, with Legoland Resorts in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzhen, all targeted to open in 2023 or 2024.

Legoland's operator, Merlin Entertainments, is already deeply invested in the country with five Madame Tussauds wax museums, Sea Life centers, and three Legoland Discovery Centers.

Also in the planning stages is a Legoland in Belgium in 2027.

A NEW WAY TO PLAY

LEGO HAS RELEASED MORE THAN 80 VIDEO GAMES SINCE 1995.

Pepper Roni is the star of the Lego Island trilogy of games.

With gags, parodies, satire and jokes aimed at both kids and adults, Lego has done video games the Lego way for decades, with more than 80 releases, including some perennial favorites.

LEGO ISLAND (1997)

The first game released in the United States, Lego Island looks positively primitive with its 1997 PC-platform graphics, but gamers say it still holds up in the most important categories: fun and nostalgia. (Sort of like Lego bricks, themselves, come to think of it.)

LEGO
ISLAND
3D Action Adventure CD-ROM Game
AGES 6-12
FREE Comic Book Inside
Free Inside!

The game also features the sort of silly dad jokes that would better be employed by Will Arnett on TV's *Lego Masters*. Sample: Ask a minifigure for a hand, and he'll give you his claw.

A big success upon its release, the game sold nearly 2 million units and effectively launched Lego's decades-long video game business. But good luck finding one now.

RELEASE DATE Sept. 26, 1997

SETTING Lego Island (duh)

GAMEPLAY In this nonlinear game with an advanced 3D look for its time, players take on the role of one of five minifigures to stop an escaped prisoner named Brickster from destroying the island brick by brick. The game ends two ways, depending on whether Brickster succeeds. Hint: If he wins, expect a lot of gloating.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS Pizza delivery boy Pepper Roni, pizzeria proprietors Mama and Papa Brickolini, and police officers Laura and Nick Brick.

FAST FACT The game launched a movement of devoted fans and even a fan-made sequel called Project Island.

LEGO CREATOR (1998)

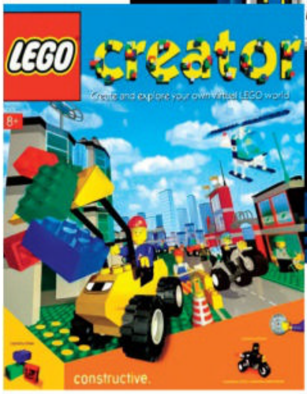
What if a video game had no challenges, no missions, no objectives? Behold Lego Creator, an early “sandbox game,” designed to replicate the experience of playing with the physical bricks but with the unlimited potential of the digital world. Later spin-offs got away from the free-form idea and imposed video game-style restrictions. Too bad.

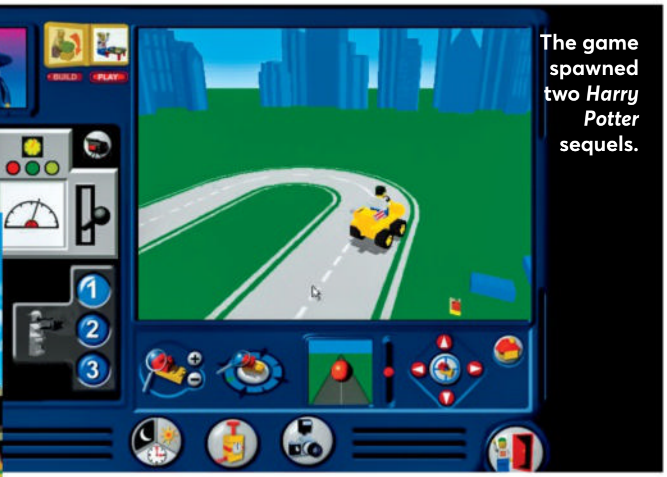
RELEASE DATE Nov. 11, 1998

SETTING Your imagination

GAMEPLAY The free-form construction concept had bricks that could not only be stacked but move and make noises; there was a Hinge, Siren and Propeller, among others. A Destructa Brick packed a dynamite charge to blow up models. Minifigures had a whole range of motions—standing, walking, driving, even speaking in gibberish. The project could be saved and reopened to work on another day.

FAST FACT Lego Digital Designer—the modern incarnation of Lego Creator—is used to help make Lego movies, video games, and even to design toys.

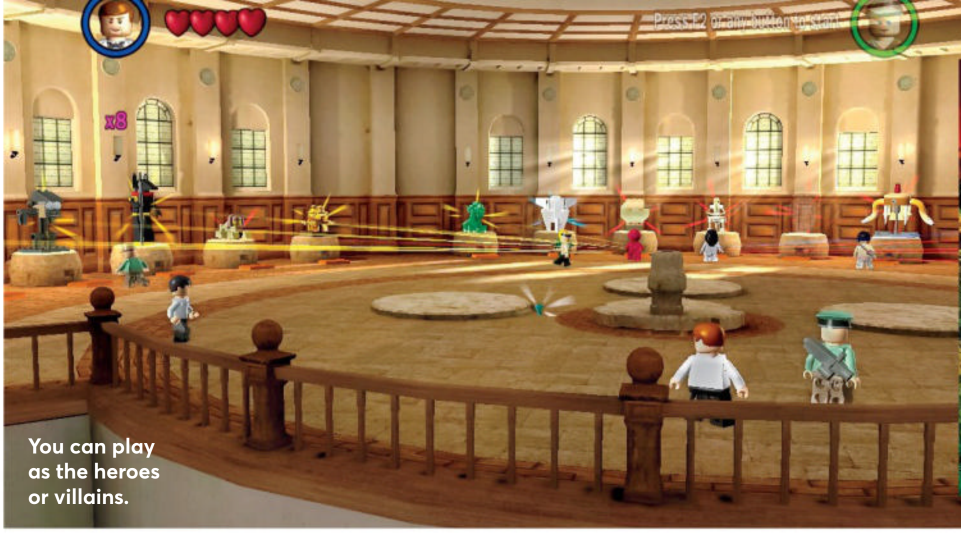




The game spawned two *Harry Potter* sequels.

LEGO
THE LORD OF THE RINGS

There are more than 80 playable characters.



You can play as the heroes or villains.

LEGO
INDIANA JONES
THE ORIGINAL ADVENTURES
games
LUCASARTS.

LEGO INDIANA JONES: THE ORIGINAL ADVENTURES (2008)

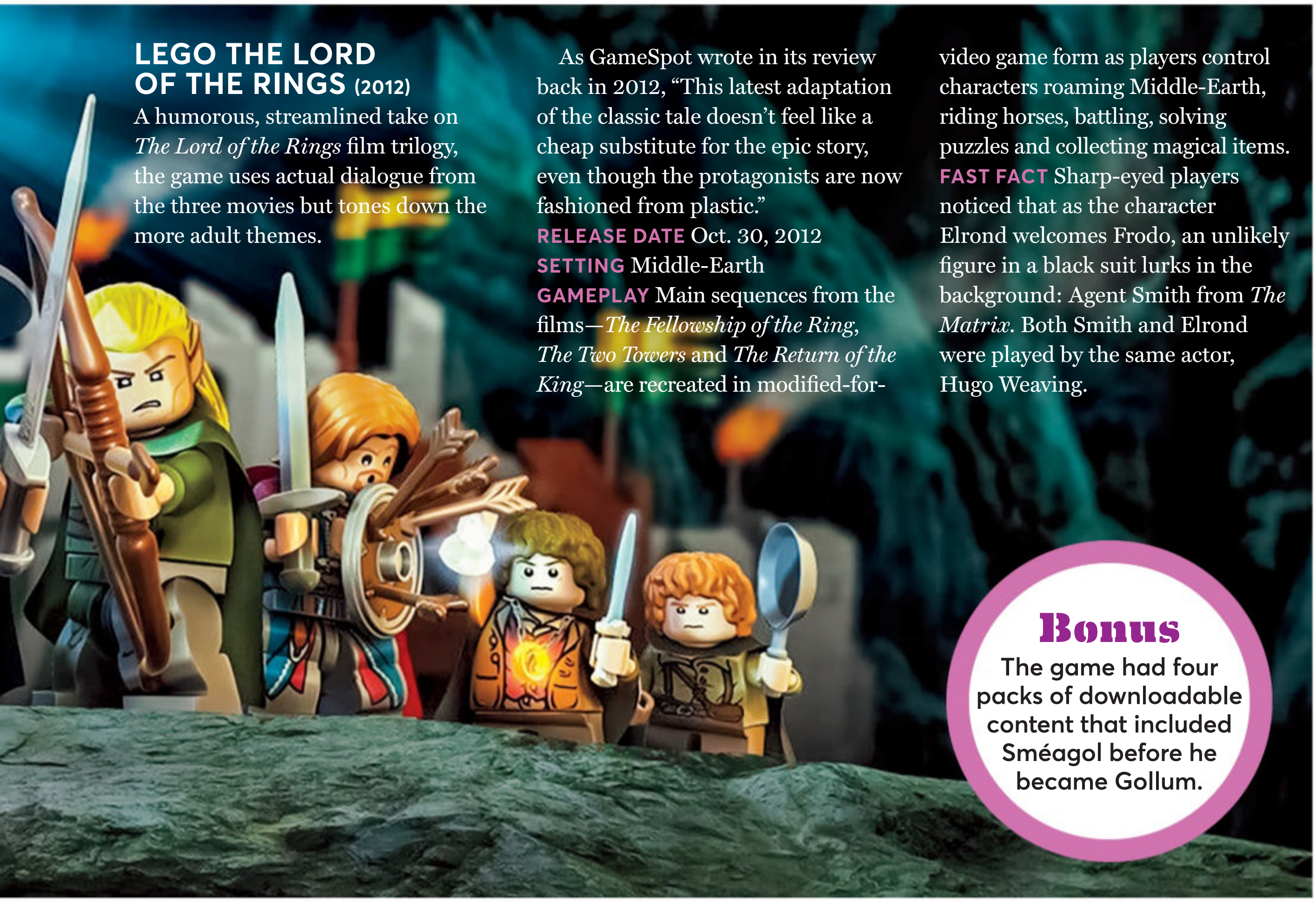
Dive into the same adventures from the first three *Indiana Jones* films but with a lot more silliness, a hallmark of the Lego games, which add humor to the more grown-up aspects of the movies for the sake of younger players. The iconic boulder-rolling and rope bridge scenes are back, as are the characters' phobias. Every time Indiana Jones sees a snake, he freezes up and loses movement capabilities. Although ancient by video game standards, it's considered a relic worthy of any gamer's quest.

RELEASE DATE June 3, 2008

SETTING Everywhere Indy goes

GAMEPLAY From the hub of Dr. Jones' college, players are initially given preselected movie characters to follow the storylines of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Temple of Doom* and *Last Crusade*. Then, during the free-play mode, they can use unlocked characters that interact with other players and the environment, solving puzzles and discovering doorways.

FAST FACT The game features a bonus character of *Star Wars*' Han Solo—Harrison Ford played both Han Solo and Indiana Jones.



LEGO THE LORD OF THE RINGS (2012)

A humorous, streamlined take on *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy, the game uses actual dialogue from the three movies but tones down the more adult themes.

As GameSpot wrote in its review back in 2012, "This latest adaptation of the classic tale doesn't feel like a cheap substitute for the epic story, even though the protagonists are now fashioned from plastic."

RELEASE DATE Oct. 30, 2012

SETTING Middle-Earth

GAMEPLAY Main sequences from the films—*The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King*—are recreated in modified-for-video game form as players control characters roaming Middle-Earth, riding horses, battling, solving puzzles and collecting magical items.

FAST FACT Sharp-eyed players noticed that as the character Elrond welcomes Frodo, an unlikely figure in a black suit lurks in the background: Agent Smith from *The Matrix*. Both Smith and Elrond were played by the same actor, Hugo Weaving.

Bonus

The game had four packs of downloadable content that included Sméagol before he became Gollum.

Lego City Undercover: The Chase Begins was released for Nintendo 3DS in 2013.

LEGO CITY UNDERCOVER (2013)

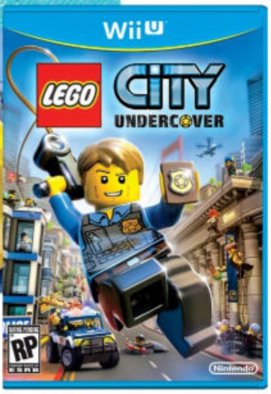
Lego's first sets were called Lego Town, in which kids could construct pleasant villages of brick homes and gas stations based on the burgeoning Danish communities popping up after World War II.

In time, the town sets grew to Lego City sets. And as with all cities, things are bit grittier. That's the concept behind Lego City Undercover, a crime-themed video game in which a cop chases a crime boss.

Lego's stab at an original story, untethered to a licensed property such as *Star Wars* or *Indiana Jones*, made comic fodder out of crime-story tropes to create what the GameStop blog called "a joyful open-world romp for players of all ages."

RELEASE DATE March 18, 2013

SETTING Lego City



GAMEPLAY The mayor of Lego City recruits undercover cop Chase McCain to tackle a crime wave set in motion by crime boss Rex Fury, who McCain had once helped to arrest but has broken out of prison. McCain's dim-witted partner Frank Honey joins in the mission that comes as bad news to McCain's girlfriend, Natalia Kowalski, who's in witness protection after testifying at Fury's trial. McCain has more than just a gun and badge: He can leap over walls, swing from poles and build almost anything out of bricks. The game spoofs the Grand Theft Auto series, flipping the POV from the crook to the cop.

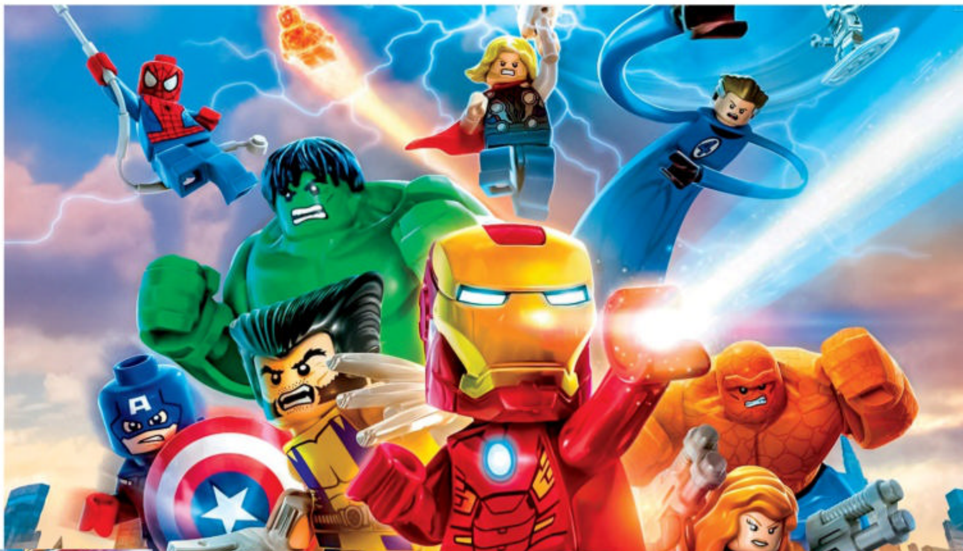
FAST FACT The script is written by former stand-up comic Graham Goring, who included only-adults-will-get-them references to *Starsky & Hutch*, *The Matrix* and *The Shawshank Redemption*.

400+ Characters

The Galactic Edition includes characters from the expanded *Star Wars* galaxy.

There are also puzzle-solving elements that fans will love.

LEGO MARVEL SUPER HEROES (2013)



Due to a thicket of copyrights so dense that not even Thor's hammer could smash through it, Marvel heroes and villains initially couldn't play or fight with each other in video games or on-screen without inviting a slew of lawsuits. Their little plastic doppelgangers faced no such restrictions, thus allowing the release of Lego Marvel Super Heroes, which had Captain America palling around with Wolverine, and Black Widow hanging with Spider-Man. Gamers swooned, making Super Heroes Lego's bestselling video game and spawning two spin-offs, Lego Marvel's Avengers in 2016 and Lego Marvel Super Heroes 2 in 2017.

LEGO MARVEL
SUPER HEROES

RELEASE DATE Oct. 22, 2013

SETTING New York

GAMEPLAY Players can control 180 characters from the Marvel Universe, each with special powers and abilities, as they join forces to thwart Doctor Doom, Loki and their gang of villains who are trying to conquer Earth with their whimsically named weapon: the Doom Ray of Doom. Along the way, Marvel characters practically trip over each other in often comical meetings, as when Black Panther goes looking for his cat, Mr. Tiddles, and runs into Nick Fury.

FAST FACT Marvel's godfather Stan Lee, who made cameos in the movies, is a playable character in the game.

PS4
LEGO
STAR WARS
THE SKYWALKER SAGA
7

LEGO STAR WARS: THE SKYWALKER SAGA (2022)

You think it's hard to make a sequel? Try coming out with a sixth new *Star Wars* game some 20 years after the original. That's exactly what Lego did with Lego Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga, blowing up the franchise like the Death Star and putting it all back together again to create a video game that had critics' eyes lighting up.

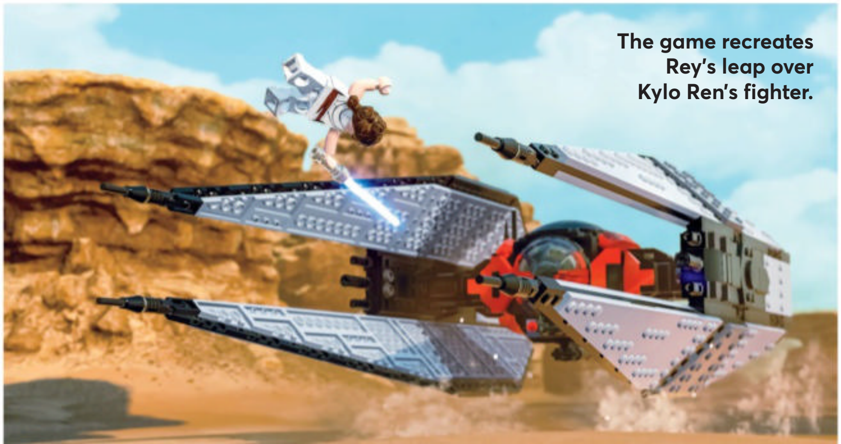
With spoofs and Easter eggs galore, the game is "a deeper, more action-packed take on Lego games," game site IGN gushed, "and one that hopefully gets applied to every Lego game from here on out."

RELEASE DATE April 5, 2022

SETTING A galaxy far, far away

GAMEPLAY Players dive into the *Star Wars* stories in any of the three trilogies—the Skywalker Saga—and fight with lightsabers and blasters, fly ships, and use The Force in locations from Tatooine to Cantonica.

FAST FACT The game includes a feature called Mumble Mode in which players can switch from the original voice acting to having the characters mumble and grunt.



The game recreates Rey's leap over Kylo Ren's fighter.

OTHER WAYS TO GET YOUR FIX

FROM PODCASTS AND PLAYING CARDS TO FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS, LEGO IS EVERYWHERE!

Floral Arrangement

Decorate the house or surprise a loved one with the Lego Flower Bouquet. Made of Lego pieces, these $60 bouquet kits come in bright colors with stems and leaves and resemble roses, daisies, snapdragons and asters. For desert flair, make arrangements from the $50 Succulents building kit.

"EVERYTHING IS AWESOME!!!"
TEGAN AND SARA
featuring
THE LONELY ISLAND
THE LEGO MOVIE
SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE NOW

Music

Many builders have favorite music mixes, but for tunes created expressly for Lego, pick up *The Lego Movie (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)*. Composer Mark Mothersbaugh used a 40-piece choir and a 100-piece orchestra for "sounds that created a universe for the Legos that was unique," he told *Entertainment Weekly*. And, yes, the soundtrack contains the song "Everything Is Awesome."

No Need to Water

The succulents can be slotted together.

Creationary

Like Pictionary but with Lego bricks, pick a card that tells you what to build under time pressure, then see if other players can guess what you've created. (resale only; price varies)

LEGO
BRICK PLAYING CARDS
2-DECK SET
JOKER
KING
JACK
QUEEN

Playing Cards

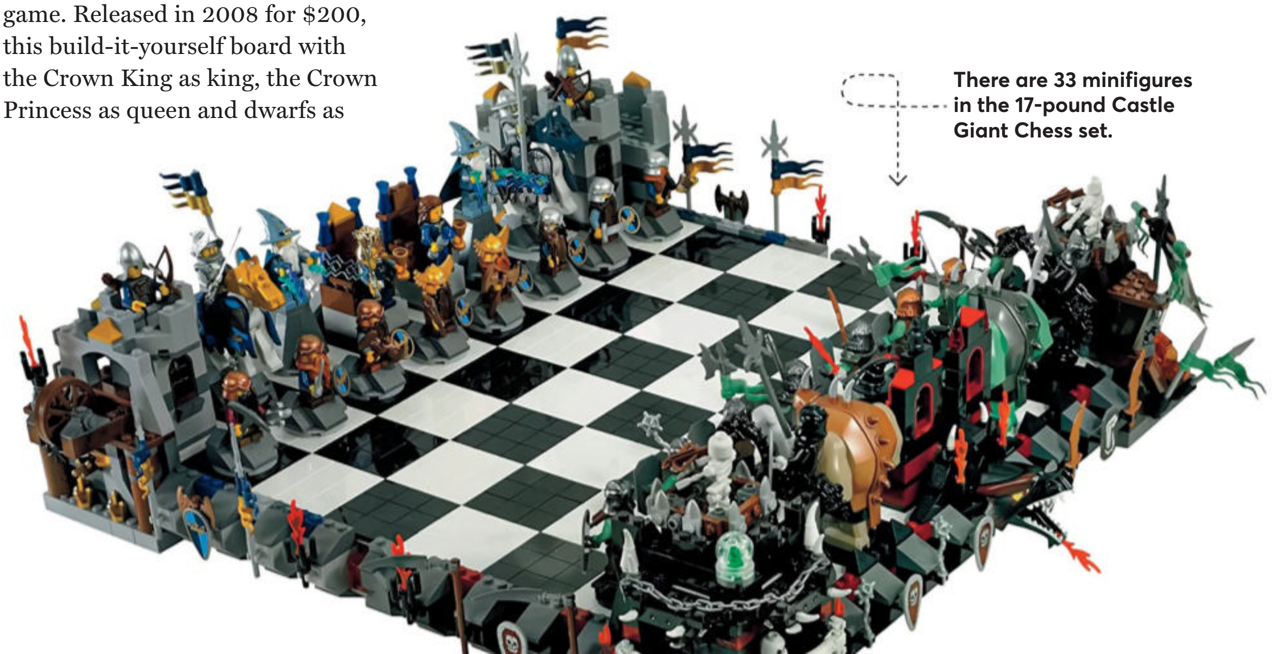
These decks ($17 for a set of two) feature Lego brick designs on one side and minifigure-style kings, queens, jacks and jokers on the other.

The perfect gift for any Lego fan.

Castle Giant Chess Set

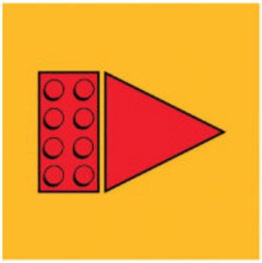
It'll cost you a king's ransom, but the 2,481-piece medieval-themed chess set is the ultimate Lego board game. Released in 2008 for $200, this build-it-yourself board with the Crown King as king, the Crown Princess as queen and dwarfs as pawns goes for more than $2,000 on the secondary market.

For those with a less princely budget, pick up the Iconic Chess Set for $65 and build your own board and playing pieces.



There are 33 minifigures in the 17-pound Castle Giant Chess set.

EXTRA
PIECES



Beyond the Brick has more than a million subscribers.

Podcasts

While nobody should ever try building sets while driving, fans can still immerse themselves in all things Lego with several podcasts.

The Extra Pieces podcast from the Lego chroniclers behind The Rambling Brick and Jay's Brick Blog covers new set announcements, news from the fan community and their own thoughts of sets they've built.

The Love of Brick podcast interviews expert builders such as the Lego mosaic specialist known as Brick Huntress, and the activists from the Women's Brick Initiative. Get the latest details on Lego conventions and other events on the Beyond the Brick podcast.

BrickCon challenges include speed tests and blindfolded building.

AFOL HEAVEN

MEET YOUR FELLOW AFOLs (ADULT FAN OF LEGO) AND GAZE UPON INSPIRED AMATEUR CREATIONS AS CONVENTIONS RETURN FROM THE COVID PANDEMIC BLUES.

BRICKCON

“Truly massive and fantastic.” That’s how Douglas Hughes from the Lego blog BrickNerd described the 2022 BrickCon, the convention specifically for adult fan of Lego, or AFOLs, as they’re known, held each year in Seattle. One of the biggest gatherings of Lego enthusiasts, the event unites homebuilders with the pros. Among the participants at the October event were most of the competitors in last season’s TV show *Lego Masters*, plus a keynote address by the director of Pixar/Disney’s *Lightyear*, Angus MacLane, himself a longtime AFOL who used Lego bricks to build models for some of the vehicles in the film. Along with exhibits and building competitions, BrickCon allows like-minded Lego fans to go a little crazy after dark with late-night Lego sessions in the basement of the Maxwell Hotel where, according to the blog Brick Architect’s Tom Alphin, “a handful of tipsy Lego enthusiasts build a complicated Lego set as fast as they can.”

BrickCon 2023 will be held in Seattle from Sept. 9-10.

BRICKFAIR

The East Coast’s leading convention, BrickFair in Fredericksburg, Virginia, invites fans of all ages to explore vendor booths with collectibles,

BrickFair attracts Lego fans of all ages.

comic books, movie memorabilia and antiques; watch Lego short films; participate in group Lego building projects; and gawk at the amazing creations by homebuilders that go beyond not only the Lego sets but Lego's own anti-combat-theme policies. The U.S. Naval Institute's roving reporter lauded an elaborate Battle of Okinawa scene of Marines landing on Hagushi beaches in 1945, made out of 70,000 Lego pieces that took a year to make.

BRICKWORLD

Chicago hosts this event for AFOLs and TFOLs (Teenage Fan of Lego) with both a private convention for the hardcore enthusiasts and an open exhibition for the public to see everything from elaborate Lego artwork to large ships and sprawling cities. The private event in June 2022 featured roundtable discussions, workshops, presentations and a much-needed opportunity for AFOLs and TFOLs to mingle after a two-year break in the event due to the COVID pandemic.

BRICK CONVENTION

The traveling Brick Convention makes its first stop in Orlando, not far from Legoland Florida Resort, in March 2023. It will feature *Lego Masters*, a gallery of Lego mosaics, a marketplace with vintage and retired sets, and the usual array of impressive home-built model. The event will donate part of the proceeds to charities helping children in need during the holidays. The convention then travels to Minneapolis; Memphis, Tennessee; West Warwick, Rhode Island; Cleveland; Springfield, Massachusetts; and Mobile, Alabama.

LEGO CON

An official Lego event that streamed on YouTube in June 2022 from the company base in Billund, Denmark, Lego Con brought banter and Lego play from its trio of hosts—British TV presenters Vick Hope and Melvin Odoom, and actor Joel McHale, who voices the Lego Dimensions video game. Actress Evanna Lynch—Luna Lovegood from the *Harry Potter* films—made an appearance, but the big draw was the unveiling of new Lego sets. Among the highlights were sneak peeks at the first Lego castle set in nearly a decade, the 4,514-piece Lego Lion Knights' Castle, with a working drawbridge and a water wheel ($400), and new *Star Wars*-themed sets, including the 1,022-piece The Justifier (bounty hunter Cad Bane's ship) for $170, and the 1,082-piece AT-TE Walker heavy artillery unit for $140.

What's MOC?

My Own Creation: Lego projects that are built with parts from multiple Lego sets.

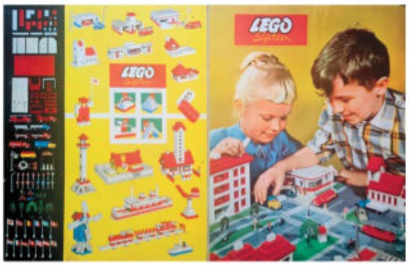
Coming Up With Ideas

One of the groundbreaking innovations embraced by Lego was the campaign to tap into the minds of the world's Lego builders for ideas for new sets. This is how the company came up with the Central Perk set from the TV show *Friends* and the *Home Alone* movie set. Builders who want to offer their ideas to Lego go to a website and submit a written description and a sample Lego model. Projects are subject to some restrictions. They can't utilize new molds or be based on intellectual properties owned by Lego's competitors or Lego licensed sets already on the shelves such as *Star Wars* or *Harry Potter* (sex, drugs and World War II violence are also taboo). Otherwise, the competition is limited only by the builder's imagination. Designers who get their ideas picked up receive a 1% royalty on sales.

The *Home Alone* set has three buildable models.

DON'T THROW AWAY THOSE LEGOS!

VINTAGE SETS AND LIMITED-EDITION RELEASES FETCH THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS ON THE COLLECTORS' MARKET. HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST COVETED ITEMS.



TOWN PLAN SET (1962)

That boy on the box is Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen, grandson of Lego founder, Ole Kirk Kristiansen, who would one day become a top Lego executive. But in this rare item, he's just a kid having fun playing with a Lego set that has a thick cardboard base imprinted with the town layout, bricks to make houses and stores, and little plastic cars.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $12.50

VALUE $4,500 (based on condition)

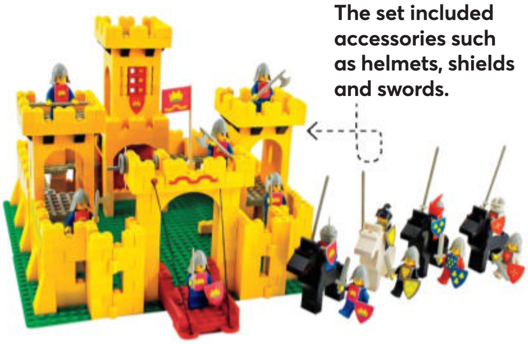
CASTLE (1978)

Never released in the United States, this 767-piece set known as the Yellow Castle with 14 breast-plated minifigures was available only in Canada, the U.K. and Australia.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $50

VALUE $9,700 (new and sealed)

The set included accessories such as helmets, shields and swords.



SPACE COMMAND CENTER (1979)

Described by the millennial lifestyle blog The Teal Mango as a "cult classic among Lego lovers," this extremely rare set came from the design mind of Lego legend Jens Nygaard Knudsen, who created the minifigure. It's the first set to include a creator base, a fixture that would become standard. With relatively few made and virtually none left in new condition, this 173-piece set includes two red astronauts and two white astronauts and a pair of space rovers.

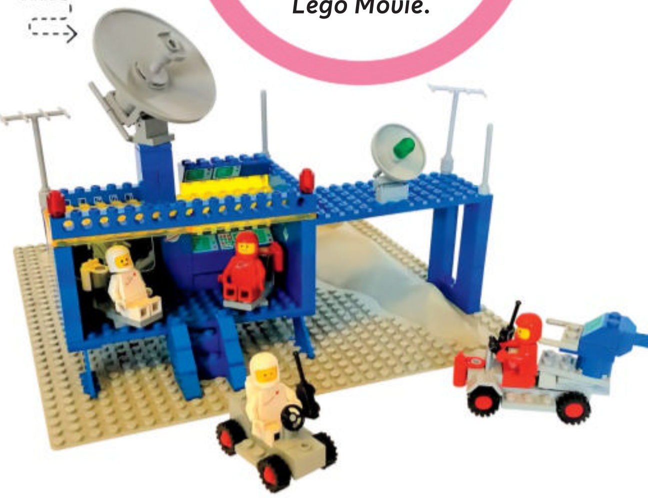
ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $25

VALUE $10,000 (new and sealed)

The almost identical U.S. set had 189 pieces.

Movie Shout-Out

A slightly modified version of this set appears in *The Lego Movie*.

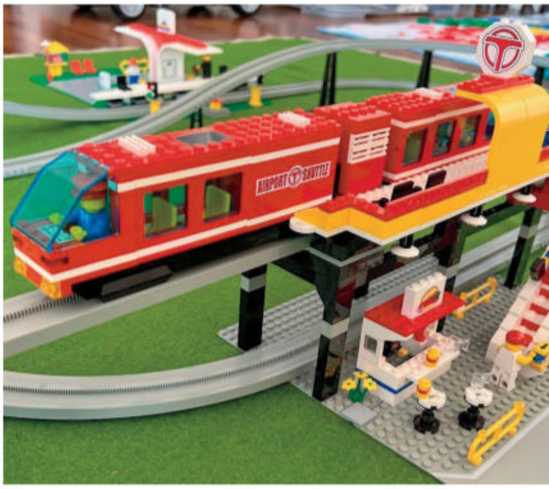


MONORAIL AIRPORT SHUTTLE (1990)

With a full crew of airport minifigure employees, including a pilot, train conductor and baggage porter, the 767-piece set whisks passengers to their gate on a red train powered by a 9-volt battery along an elevated track accessible by a staircase. The ground-level hamburger stand is so detailed it contains tabs for ketchup and mustard and plates with burgers.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $140

VALUE $5,200 (boxed and sealed)



CLOUD CITY (2003)

Tied to the film *Star Wars: Episode V—The Empire Strikes Back*, the 698-piece set has seven minifigures including Luke Skywalker, Leia Organa, Han Solo and Darth Vader.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $100

VALUE $8,500 (new and sealed)

It included Han Solo in carbonite and Boba Fett.

HAN SOLO INDIANA JONES TRANSFORMATION CHAMBER (2008)

The set misspells Solo's name as Hans Solo, just one reason this crossover set—originally given away at the Lego 2008 Toy Fair Collectors Party—is so valuable. The other is that only 100 were made. The set places the two characters, both played by Harrison Ford, on a rotating platform to make it look like one is transforming into the other.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE Free

VALUE $7,500

LEGO STAR WARS
LEGO INDIANA JONES

The Han Solo minifigure is unique to this set.

Han the Destroyer

Harrison Ford smashed a Lego *Millennium Falcon* on *Conan* in 2015.

LEGO
Ole Kirk's House

A 2012 version was given to Lego staff for Christmas.

OLE KIRK'S HOUSE (2009)

Only 32 hand-numbered sets were created in this most special of special editions, which were given to participants of a 2009 Lego Inside Tour. The 910-piece set replicates the Lego founder's childhood home and is virtually impossible to find anywhere. But buyers must beware: A similar later version of the set was produced in larger numbers and fetches a mere $700.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE Free

VALUE $10,700 (new and sealed)

He can be distinguished by the red on his legs.

SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON SPIDER-MAN (2013)

A raffle prize at the 2013 Comic-Con, this minifigure in a finely rendered blue mesh suit is harder to spot than the real Spider-Man. To get top dollar, Spidey must be sealed in plastic in a package bearing the words "Marvel Super Heroes," the Lego logo, and the age range 5+. Only 300 were originally manufactured.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE Free

VALUE $15,000 (new and sealed)

MINIFIGURES SERIES 10 SET (2013)

This minifigures set of 16 pieces featured a randomly placed Mr. Gold minifigure covered in gold chrome metallic paint (not real gold) and Mr. Gold himself looks a lot like a top-hatted Mr. Monopoly character. Taller than the regular minifigure, Mr. Gold stands on a black plastic display base and holds a staff in his white-gloved hand. Only 5,000 Mr. Gold figures were made.

ORIGINAL RETAIL PRICE $3

VALUE $4,600

Beware of fakes! The real minifigure even has gold on the soles of his feet.

LEGO minifigures
10
5+
Where is Mr. Gold?

BY THE NUMBERS

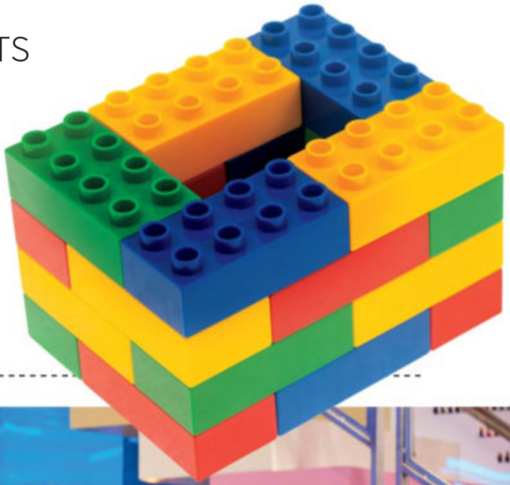
BREAKING DOWN THE FACTS AND FIGURES.

24

DIFFERENT WAYS TWO LEGO BRICKS CAN BE JOINED.

102,981,500

Possible combinations that six Lego bricks can be clicked together.



3 million

Number of Lego pieces available in the studio for builders on TV's *Lego Masters.*

33

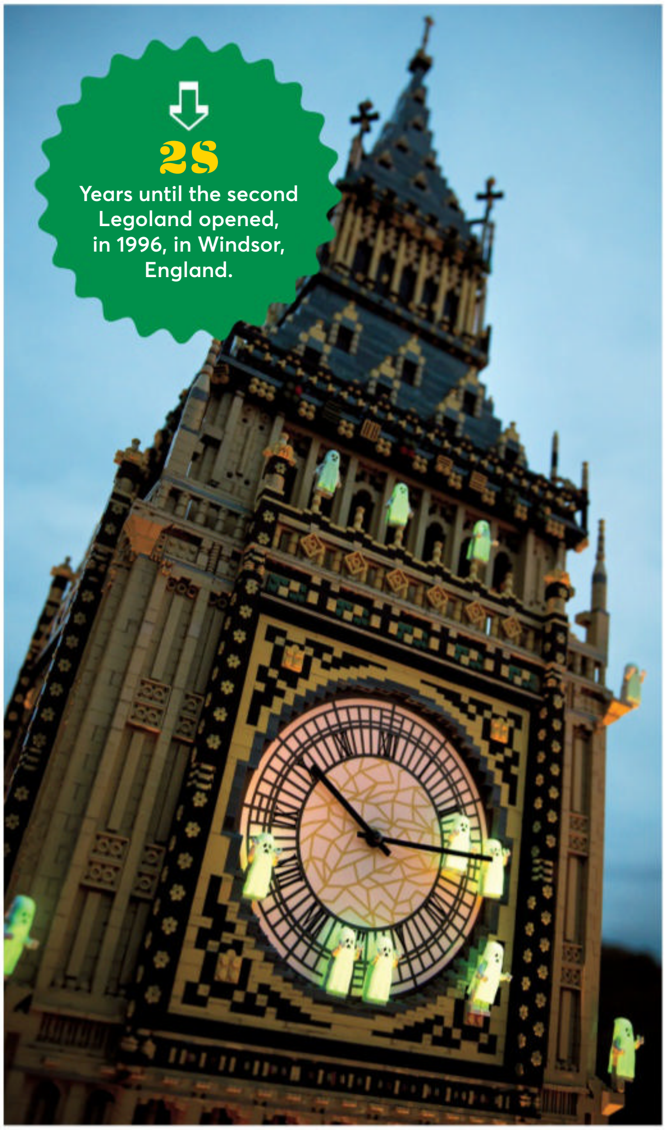
Total number of people who build displays in Legoland parks in the United States.

1968

YEAR THE FIRST LEGOLAND OPENED IN BILLUND, DENMARK.

700 million

Tires produced by Lego, with Guinness World Records naming Lego the world's largest tire manufacturer, making far more than Firestone, Bridgestone or Michelin.



28

Years until the second Legoland opened, in 1996, in Windsor, England.

36,000
Bricks produced every minute in Lego factories.

36 billion

BRICKS PRODUCED EVERY YEAR.

2,350

Different Lego elements, from bricks to plates to minifigure hats.

4 billion

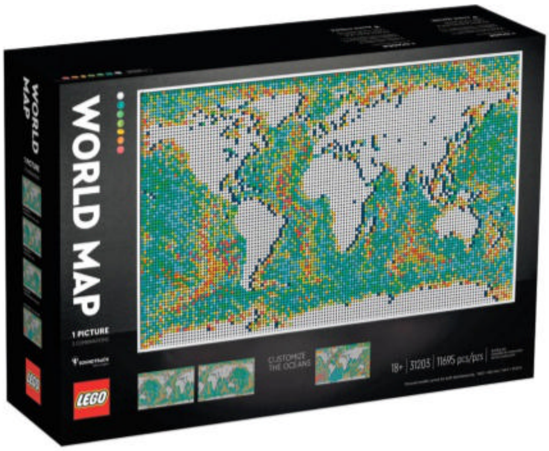
LEGO MINIFIGURES IN CIRCULATION. IN COMPARISON, THE POPULATION OF EARTH IS 8 BILLION.

15,080,330

Bricks you'd need to recreate *The Lego Movie* by hand.

40 billion

LEGOS YOU'D NEED TO STACK TO REACH THE MOON.


WORLD MAP
1 PICTURE
LEGO
CUSTOMIZE THE OCEANS
18+ | 31203 | 11695 pcs/pcs

11,695

Lego pieces in the largest set of all time, the Lego Art World Map.

40

PERCENT OF LEGOS SOLD DURING THE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER HOLIDAY SEASON.

BRICKTIONARY

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LEGO, FROM A TO Z.

Automatic Binding Bricks

A precursor to Lego, these construction bricks were made of a different kind of plastic that didn't fit as snuggly as the material that would later be used.

Brick

The overall term used for any Lego part, regardless of the shape, size or color.

Fun Fact

Black, light bluish gray, dark bluish gray and white make up more than 50% of Lego bricks produced.

Christiansen

The Danish family behind the Lego dynasty. Founder Ole Kirk Kristiansen's name is spelled with a K on his birth certificate, but he used both the Ch or K spelling. In 1979, Ole's son Godtfred Kirk Kristiansen officially changed his name to Christiansen but his son Kjeld uses Kristiansen.

Dark Ages

A time in a Lego fan's life when they turn away from the bricks in favor of other non-Lego interests before returning to the fold.

"Everything Is Awesome"

The catchy song from *The Lego Movie* that was written sarcastically but became an Oscar-nominated tune.

FFOL

An acronym for Female Fan of Lego. Lego boxes initially said the sets were for boys age 7 to 12. In the 1970s, Lego wrote a letter to parents stating: "A lot of boys like dolls houses. They're

Advanced builders tend to add greebles in gray.

more human than spaceships. A lot of girls prefer spaceships. They're more exciting than dolls houses. The most important thing is to put the right material in their hands and let them create whatever appeals to them."

Greebles

Small technical details added mostly to the surface of large builds of space-related and mecha sets.

Harry Potter

Along with *Star Wars*, it was the first licensing deal struck by Lego in 1999 (two years ahead of the release of the first *Harry Potter* film), beginning a phenomenally successful partnership.

Lego has released 125 Harry Potter sets.

Super Mario gave Lego another popular licensing deal.

Innovation

According to the Lego company history *Brick by Brick*, Lego serves as a model for business innovation with its decentralized system for managing innovation.

Jørgen Vig Knudstorp

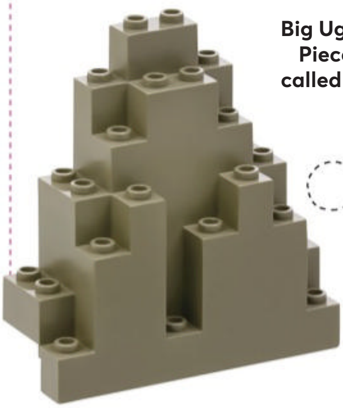
The first non-family member to lead Lego, Knudstorp succeeded Kjeld Kirk Kristiansen and was instrumental in turning the company around financially during the early 2000s slump.

Kiddicraft Self-Locking Building Bricks

The line of British construction bricks that inspired Lego.

LURP

Short for Little Ugly Rock Piece, it's a prefabricated section of rock face. Some fans prefer to build their own.



Big Ugly Rock Pieces are called BURPs.

Think About This

Four billion minifigures have been made. That's twice the population of China.

Minifigure

The little Lego people first produced in 1978. Also known as a minifig.

Nanofigure

Even smaller than a minifigure. Also known as nanofigs, they sometimes don't have a stud on the head.

They may be small but these nanofigures are superheroes.

Ole Kirk Christiansen

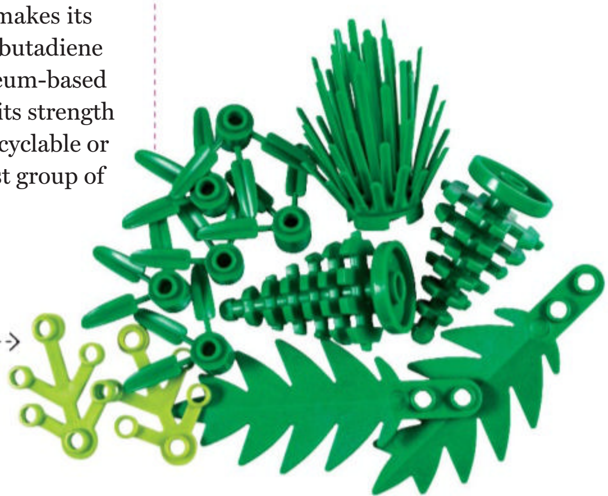
The Danish carpenter who founded The Lego Group.

Plants

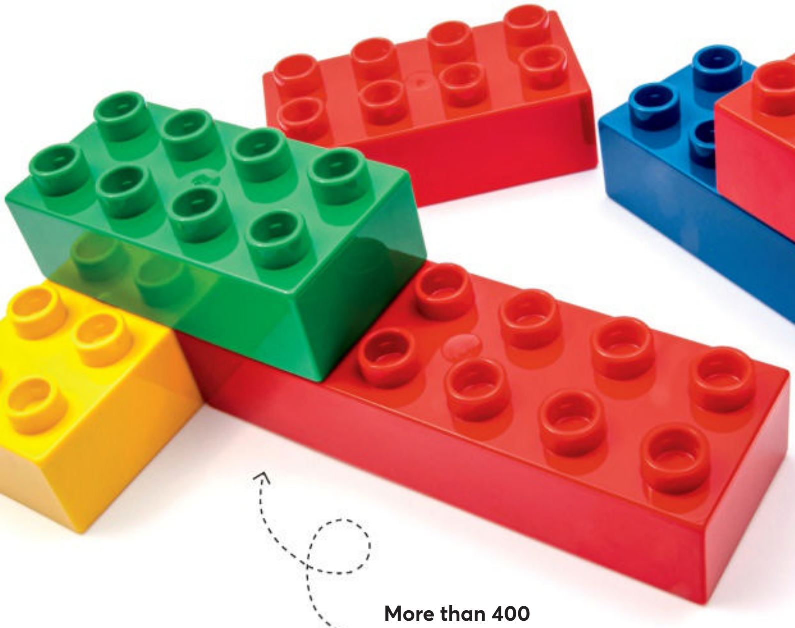
In 2018, Lego announced that it wanted to move away from plastic and into green materials. The company currently makes its pieces from acrylonitrile butadiene styrene, or ABS, a petroleum-based thermoplastic prized for its strength and rigidity that is not recyclable or biodegradable. Lego's first group of non-ABS parts were made from sugar cane and called Plants from Plants.

Quality Control

During manufacturing, Lego pieces undergo multiple rounds of quality control inspection, with only about 18 out of 1 million pieces getting rejected.



Trees, leaves and bushes made from plants.



More than 400 million people have played with Legos.

Rainbow Warrior

Someone who builds using every color available. Creations that use different colors or pieces but still follow official instructions are called a Garbage Build.

Sigfig

A minifigure that is made with features that resemble the person who made it.

Tubes

The cylindrical parts inside of a Lego brick that, together with the studs, forms a bond that is both snug and easily disassembled.

UCS

The Ultimate Collector Series of advanced models is made for older, more experienced builders.

Violence

Lego shuns any sets rooted in war, combat and other forms of real-life violence, an ethos so deeply ingrained that executives initially balked at licensing *Star Wars*.

Wood

The original material Ole Kirk Kristiansen used to build his toys before switching to injectable plastic after World War II.

X-Files

In 2019, a Lego fan named Brent Waller suggested a set based on the hit TV show to Lego Ideas. Two years later, he reached the required 10,000 supporters for Lego to review his X-Files: I Want to Believe submission (which included minifigures of Mulder and Scully along with other characters such as the Lone Gunmen). In October 2021, the board announced that they “will not produce this project as a set.” Hundreds of fans shared their disappointment over the decision and urged Waller to resubmit his project.

Yellow

The color of most minifigures, chosen so that the figures are not identifiable with any ethnicity.

A-Z of Awesome

The name of an ongoing campaign using Lego builds to celebrate inclusivity and embrace self-expression among fans in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Lego is also making donations to LGBTQIA+ charities.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW LEGO?

PUT YOURSELF TO THE TEST WITH THIS ULTIMATE QUIZ.

1 The first Legoland was in Billund, Denmark. Where was the second?

A Carlsbad, California
B Windsor, England
C Malaysia

2 Duplo bricks are named after:

A Duplus, the Latin word for "double."
B Spanish coin doubloons
C A region in Denmark

3 Mindstorms kits are based on:

A Robotics
B Hydraulics
C Economics

4 ABS relates to:

A Initials of Lego's founder
B Braking system for Lego cars
C Chemical name for Lego plastic

5 Which country does *not* manufacture Lego:

A Mexico
B Hungary
C United States

6 How many Lego bricks are produced each year:

A 36 billion
B 112 billion
C 330 billion

7 The first toys created by Lego's founder were made of:

A Rubber
B Wood
C Tin

8 The mashup of the Danish phrase "leg godt," which inspired the name Lego, translates as:

A Toy god
B Play well
C Small hands

9 Lego Day on Jan. 28, 1958, marks:

A The birthdate of Lego's founder
B The date of the first sale of a Lego set
C The date of Lego's patent filing

10 Lego is the world's largest manufacturer of:

- A Tires
- B Toy trucks
- C Plastic palm trees

11 Lego's top toy competitor is:

- A K'Nex
- B Mattel
- C Hasbro

12 Once-Kids makes its Lego-compatible bricks out of:

- A Ice
- B Glass
- C Wood

13 Which comic actor performs on the song "Everything Is Awesome"?

- A Will Arnett
- B Andy Samberg
- C Jim Carrey

14 *The Lego Batman Movie* enjoys this percentage of "certified fresh" on Rotten Tomatoes:

- A 74%
- B 83%
- C 90%

15 This character has the most different minifigures:

- A Luke Skywalker
- B Indiana Jones
- C Harry Potter

16 The most expensive Lego set, the *Star Wars* AT-AT set from 2021, retails for:

- A $850
- B $1,000
- C $1,112

17 Season 1 *Lego Masters* champions Tyler and Amy Clites built a model featuring this mythical beast:

- A Unicorn
- B Push Me Pull You
- C Griffin

18 MOC in Lego lingo stands for:

- A Made Of Cheese
- B My Own Creation
- C Manufactured in Ontario, Canada

19 BrickCon is:

- A A convention for Lego fans
- B Short for "Brick Construction"
- C A joking term for people who steal Lego ideas

20 The valuable collectible minifigure Mr. Gold is covered in:

- A Real gold leaf
- B Brass
- C Metallic paint

Answers: 1. b; 2. a; 3. a; 4. c; 5. c; 6. a; 7. b; 8. b; 9. c; 10. a; 11. b; 12. c; 13. b; 14. c; 15. a; 16. a; 17. c; 18. b; 19. a; 20. c

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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
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Knight's Castle